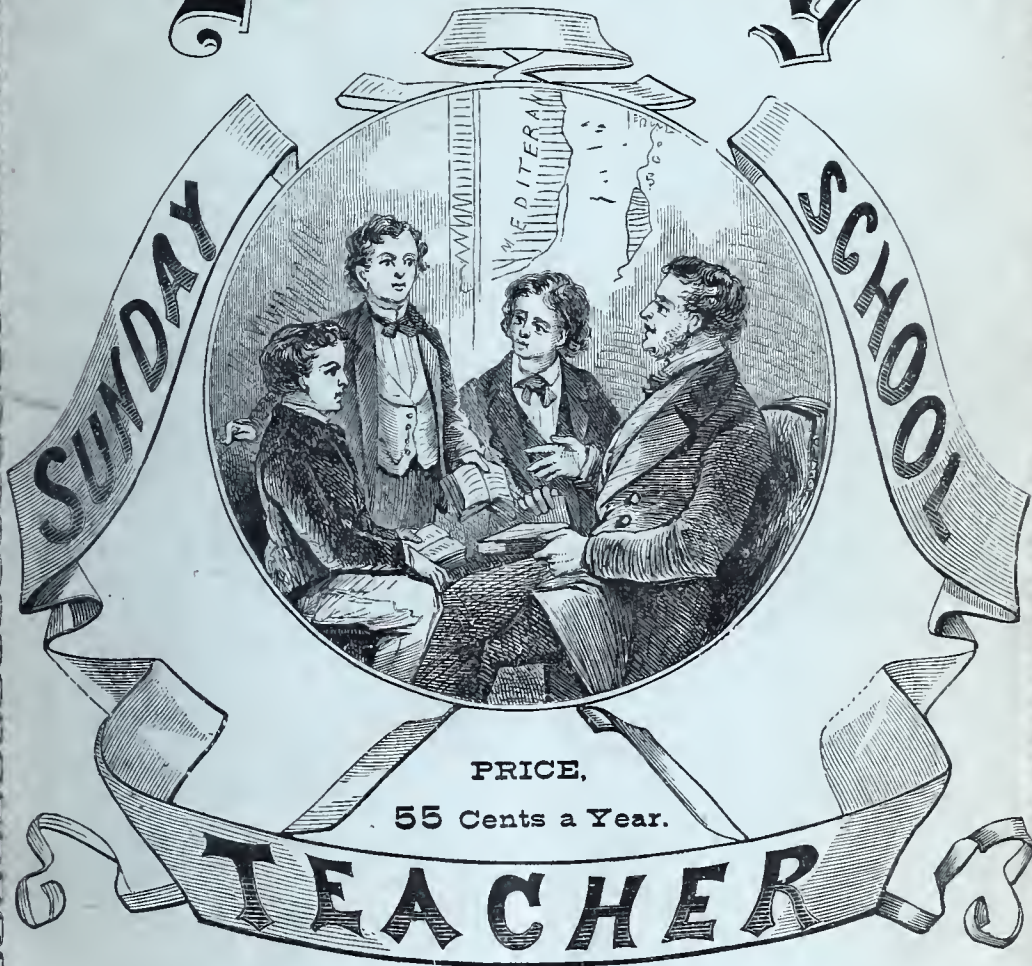


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THE AUGSBURG SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER.

VOL. V.

PHILADELPHIA, APRIL, 1879.

No. 4.

PROF. H. LOUIS BAUGHER, EDITOR.

EDITORIAL BREVITIES.

—"Coronation Hymns and Songs," edited by Dr. Deems and T. E. Perkins, and published by A. S. Barnes & Co., is just out, intended "for praise and prayer-meetings, home and social singing." It begins with "Coronation" and ends with "Olmutz." Of the 122 tunes in the book one-half are old, made up about equally of church tunes and the ordinary Sunday-school style of tunes. These old ones are generally good, and it is claimed by the editors for the new ones that they "deserve trial." Sold at the usual price of Sunday-school singing books.

—The Fifteenth Annual Convention of the "Pennsylvanian State Sabbath-school Association" will be held in Altoona, June 3-5. The efficient State Secretary, Ed. S. Wagoner, of Mechanicsburg, wants our Lutheran Sunday-schools and Sunday-school organizations to see to it that they have that representation there to which they are entitled, and urges them to elect delegates and have them attend, or else not be heard afterwards complaining that the Lutherans were not properly represented. All of which sounds very sensible, and we commend the matter to our readers. The Programme of Convention and further announcements may be expected in our next number.

—The following, printed on cards for

previous distribution, illustrates the Sunday-school life and enterprising spirit of the parties concerned:

LUTHERAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL OF LEWISTOWN.

DEAR FRIEND: The exercises in our Sunday-school to-morrow, March 2d, will be opened with an anthem, embracing passages from the 51st Psalm, from which the lesson of the day is taken, to be sung by a quartette. This will be followed by prayer and the reading of the verses in concert; the hymn, "Whiter than Snow," will be sung by the school, after which the classes will take up the usual duties.

At the close the pastor will read the poem "Beautiful Snow," and make application of the truths of the lesson. Easter-egg money boxes will then be distributed to the school, and full explanations given. COME!

As these exercises will all be embraced within the usual time allotted for the regular session, you will readily see the necessity for punctuality.

THE APPOINTMENTS

For the day are as follows: Sunday-school at 9 a. m.; preaching service at $\frac{1}{4}$ before 11 a. m.; teachers' meeting at 6 p. m.; children's church at 7 p. m. To any or all of these services your friends will receive a most cordial welcome.

THE SUPERINTENDENTS.

—It does a body good to get a letter like the following. The writer is personally unknown to us, and we trust he will pardon us for putting in print what was not intended for the public. Aside from the complimentary terms in which he speaks of our work, there is so much good sound sense expressed, that we cannot refrain from putting the letter in our columns. The suggestions it contains will be duly weighed in connection with our future publications.

"MIFFLIN, *Feb.* 14, 1879.

"PROF. H. L. BAUGHER: *Dear Brother*—I write first, to tell you how much *we* value the Lesson Book. *We*, means the pastor, teachers and scholars of the Lutheran Sunday-school in Mifflintown. Its merits have been fully discussed at our teachers' meetings. We value it so highly that not a single feature would we have omitted. The general arrangement is excellent. Questions, pointed and practical; brief notes, comprehensive and suggestive; Dictionary, Chronological Table, Music, Hymns, etc., all good. After examining and studying other Lesson Helps, we return to our Augsburg with a keen relish, because we think it excels them all, but (always a but) 2d, our school and perhaps all country schools need an awakening on the subject of concert reading and concert exercises in general. The Lesson Book supplies the want at the end of each Quarter. It would be a help to *us* to have a short responsive reading for each Sabbath. It breaks the ice, takes off the chill, and brings teachers and scholars into a unison of feeling, and prepares both for the work of the hour. How you must be perplexed in making your selections of music—what is termed Sunday-school music of modern times is raining upon us like a flood. What gleaning, and sifting, and purging is necessary to find words in poetry that contain evangelical truths, and Bible doctrine. Too much sensation; too little truth. Too much noise; too little music. Good, truthful words, good poetry, fitted to good music, seems to

be too much to expect from the average writer of Sunday-school music of the present day.

The perplexing and vexatious subject of expensive music for Sunday-schools can be met and settled in the Lesson Book. Too much care can not be exercised in the selections for that department of the Book. Every piece should be good enough to teach to the school.

We sing one of the hymns from the Book of Worship at each session, and are pleased to have them inserted. As Lutherans we rejoice in the advancement made by the General Synod of the Lutheran church in Sunday-school work and Sunday-school literature; we would have these at the advance of the Sunday-school column—not in flash and sensation, but in intelligent, religious progress and culture, in spiritual zeal and Christian development. This we regard as real progress. Progress that will "tell" for the honor and glory of God and for salvation of souls. Dear Brother, we earnestly pray that God's blessing may attend your labor of love for our Sunday-schools. Oh, what a grand work it is to do something that will induce men to live a higher and nobler life in this world, and in the next to enjoy life eternal. Think not that your arduous labors are unappreciated. The Sunday-school army of the Lutheran Church, if called upon for testimony, would fail in words to express its joy and gratitude.

"Fraternally yours,

"A. H. WEIDMAN,

"*Supt. Luth. S. School.*"

TRUTHS TWICE LEARNED.

BY REV. W. E. PARSON.

The first lesson of this month is on "Sanctified Affliction." This is a lesson that must be twice learned. We learn it first in advance of the affliction. We learn the truth, the outward word, and believe it. We store it up in memory against the time to come. Here comes the great benefit of com-

mitting Scripture. Children do not need, as children, the consolations that belong to the maturer man, but they need to lay up in the memory what God promises, that in the evil day grace may come to them through the Word, recalled by the mysterious workings of the human soul.

I think of it in this way. We learn a great many truths once. By and by the day of our need comes, and we learn them again as never before. We might get an illustration from the methods which artists use who paint on china. Go into their workshops and you will find the designs carefully laid on, with all the delicacy of color and finish of completed work. But something else remains to be done. The ware is to be put into an oven, where the heat *bakes in* the colors, so that they will wear and wash. Many truths of our Bible are only on the outside of us as yet. We are not hypocrites. We know all we can know until the furnace of trial burns indelibly into our souls the fullest and deepest meanings of God's truths.

This is the second learning, the only real acquaintance with the secret of the Most High. In this understanding of God's methods we say with James, "Blessed is the man that *endureth* temptation," or trial. And in the same line of thought we say, Unfortunate is the man to whom "God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not." Never having learned once, in the Sabbath-school or in the Christian home, how shall he know the meaning of God's providence? To him there is no second unfolding of the deep meaning of God's Word, because there is no first foundation Word.

"Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living."

QUEEN ESTHER.

BY MISS ANNIE HANTCH.

A great evil like a wall of fire was compassing the Israelites of Shushan. There was feasting in the marble palaces of the city and wailing in the hearts of the people. In sackcloth and ashes an old man trod the crowded streets, exclaiming in the bitter abundance of his heart, "A people are going to be destroyed who have done no evil." The trail of woe swept through the palm groves of the city to the river bank, and followed the silver trail of the current to the fragrant Edens of the south. It passed beyond the city to the hamlet, among the waving cornfields, on over the crested peaks of snowy mountains, to the remotest provinces, sounding its death-shriek in ten thousand Hebrew homes. It penetrated the guarded privacy of the women's palace, and a copy of the King's decree was given to Esther, coupled with the solemn plea that she should rise in her womanhood and queenhood and plead for the lives of her people.

The queen naturally hesitated before assuming the office of intercessor.

She probably remembered the fate of Vashti, who defied her lord, and there was in her own heart the consciousness that she stood not so high in the favor of the King as in previous days. The fallacy of pleading for a doomed cause, in a land where a sovereign's law was irrevocable, and the imminent certainty of the danger she incurred, in presenting herself uninvited before the king—all these combined to make a brave, prudent woman hesitate before making so perilous a decision.

On the other hand, had she not been raised from obscurity to arrest this great calamity now falling upon her people?—and was she not, as her name indicated, Esther the Star, to lead them by her steady light through the darkness to the red dawn of morning? "I go," was the memorable reply to the request of Mordecai, "gather all the Jews in Shushan and fast for three days. I also and my maidens will fast. I will go in unto the king; and if I perish, I perish."

History now generally concedes that the Ahasueras of the book of Esther is

the Xerxes of secular history. There are several reasons to support this assertion. Both monarchs are represented as holding a great feast in Shushan in the third year of their reigns. Xerxes, in the seventh year of his reign, after the defeat of his Grecian expedition, was in Shushan, giving himself up to sensual pleasures. It was in the seventh year of his reign that Ahasuerus added scores of beautiful women to his harem, and sought among them for a successor to Vashti. To this we might add that there is a harmonious consistency of character existing between the imbecile who lashed into foam the rebellious waters of the Hellespont and the tyrant who dethroned the queen and repudiated the wife because the refinement of the woman forbade her appearing before the gross companions of his drunken revel.

This was the sovereign to whom she was to make her appeal. A commander of hosts, who sacrificed armies and navies to his caprices, who desecrated and destroyed the art cities of Greece, and sent a torrent of hot human blood down the rocky cliffs of Thermopylæ—a monarch who was neither a wise statesman nor a generous soldier—a man whose strongest interests were concentrated upon his harems, and whose whole life was a satire upon kingship.

After three days spent in fasting with her maidens, Esther arrayed herself in royal apparel and sought uninvited the presence of her sovereign. Uninspired Jewish authorities say that Esther trembled, and the king was angry, but, charmed by her rare beauty, the golden sceptre was laid upon her neck, and the trembling queen was promised all she desired, even to the half of the kingdom. But Esther had not been for several years a member of the Persian court without learning diplomacy, and the extent of her request was an invitation to the king and Haman to banquet with her the following day.

In the cool colonnade of the banquet hall, when the red wine flashed in the crystal cups, Esther found courage to tell the king of the plot against her people; how Haman had planned the

extermination of the Jews because Mordecai refused to tender him the obeisance his proud spirit demanded. The king, in wrathful indignation that through the intrigues of a courtier he had well-nigh lost a nation of loyal subjects, and sacrificed in this carnival of blood his beautiful queen, fled in agitation to the garden, and Haman, having sinned beyond pardon, was carried with covered face, a doomed criminal, from the palace.

It is hard to account for the insatiable desires of the human heart. Haman, with all "the glory of riches and promotion over princes," his oriental pride in the "multitude of his children," had still one unattainable acme of ambition—the idolatrous homage of a poor Jew. We are reminded of the king who dwelt in an ivory palace and governed a great city, who stained his soul with blood and entailed a curse upon his descendants to possess the purple vineyards of a neighbor; and of that other great ruler, who held in his hand the wealth and prosperity of a nation, and was himself the shining focus of church and state, who thrust aside the sacred portals of a home and stole from a weaker brother his one ewe lamb.

Once more Esther makes a final appeal in behalf of her people. Down at the feet of the despot in the bitter abandonment of grief and tears, she won the "grace of the golden sceptre," and while the beautiful, dark face of the Hebrew woman grew eloquent with the pathos of her theme, she begged for a reversal of the cruel decree, because it was not in her tender heart to endure the destruction of her kindred.

It was not in the power of a monarch of Persia to revoke a decree once issued. The king endeavored to repair the evil designed by Haman by sending couriers throughout the land, granting to the Jews the privilege of defending themselves against the aggressors, and appropriating the spoils of their enemies.

There is no controverting the truthfulness of the book of Esther. The best proof of its genuineness lies in the fact, that the feast of Purim, estab-

lished to commemorate the time when their sorrow was turned into joy, has been celebrated by the Jews through the vicissitudes of more than twenty centuries, even to the present time.

Profane history is silent with regard to Queen Esther. From this it has been inferred that she was perhaps only a favorite inferior wife of the king. While secular history devotes but scant paragraphs to the lives of most of the queens of Persia, sacred history groups together in the book of

Esther the most tragic elements of life and character, and makes the queen herself the heart and core of the drama—the intercessor and deliverer of a nation.

Devotion to the individual, whether it be the result of passionate impulse or the steady principle of a life, is no unusual trait in the character of a woman; but devotion such as Esther's to a cause and to a people has in it the essence of that spirit which upholds the arm of the soldier and permeates the soul of the martyr.

DELITZSCH ON ISAIAH.

Dr. Franz Delitzsch, a German theologian and joint author with Dr. Keil of an able critical commentary on the Old Testament, divides the book of Isaiah into two general parts, the second of which includes from chapter xl. to the end of the book. This second half he divides into three parts, and makes each part contain nine addresses or prophecies. We give below his detailed table of contents of this latter half of Isaiah: and here present some of his general statements concerning it.

The first part sets forth the deliverance from Babylon, in which the prophecy of Jehovah is fulfilled, to the shame and overthrow of the idols and their worshipers; the second part, the way of the Servant of Jehovah through deep humiliation to exaltation and glory, which is at the same time the exaltation of Israel to the height of its world-wide calling; the third part, the indispensable conditions of participation in the future redemption and glory. So far as the language is concerned, there is nothing more finished or more elevated in the whole of the Old Testament than this trilogy of addresses by Isaiah. And when we turn to the contents of this trilogy, it is more incomparable still. It commences with a prophecy, which gave to John the Baptist the great theme of his preaching. It closes with the prediction of the creation of a new heaven and new earth, beyond which even the

last page of the New Testament Apocalypse cannot go. And in the centre the sufferings and exaltation of Christ are proclaimed as clearly as if the prophet had stood beneath the cross itself, and had seen the risen Saviour. He is transported to the very commencement of the New Testament times, and begins just like the New Testament evangelists. He afterwards describes the death and resurrection of Christ as completed events, with all the clearness of a Pauline discourse. And lastly, he clings to the heavenly world beyond, like John in the Apocalypse. Yet the Old Testament limits are not disturbed; but, within those limits, evangelist, apostle, and apocalypticist are all condensed into one.

Isaiah is a book left to the church for future interpretation. To none of the Old Testament prophets who followed him was the ability given perfectly to open the book. Nothing but the coming of the Servant of Jehovah in the person of Jesus Christ could break all the seven seals.

This last half of the book was written in Hezekiah's time, but the writer is entirely carried away from his own times, and leads a pneumatic life (life in the spirit) among the exiles. There is, in fact, no more "Johannic" book in the whole of the Old Testament than this book of consolation. It is like the product of an Old Testament gift of tongues. The fleshly body of speech has been changed into a glori-

fied body; and we hear, as it were, spiritual voices from the world beyond, or world of glory.

The contents of the portion spoken of is thus given:

PART I.

First Prophecy.—Words of Comfort, and the God of comfort. (Chap. xl.)

Second Prophecy.—The God of the world's history, and of prophecy. (Chap. xli.)

Third Prophecy.—The Mediator of Israel and Saviour of the Gentiles. (Chap. xlii. 1–xliii. 13.)

Fourth Prophecy.—Avenging and Deliverance; and Outpouring of the Spirit. (Chap. xliii. 14–xliv. 5.)

Fifth Prophecy.—The Ridiculous God's of the Nations; and the God of Israel who makes his people rejoice, (Chap. xliv. 6–23.)

Sixth Prophecy.—Cyrus, the Anointed of Jehovah, and Deliverer of Israel. (Chap. xliv. 24–xlv.)

Seventh Prophecy.—Fall of the Gods of Babel. (Chap. xlv.)

Eighth Prophecy.—Fall of Babel, the Capital of the Empire of the World. (Chap. xlvii.)

Ninth Prophecy.—Deliverance from Babylon. (xlviii.)

PART II.

First Prophecy.—Self-attestation of the Servant of Jehovah. The Despondency of Zion Reproved. (Chap. xlix.)

Second Prophecy.—Israel's self-rejection; and the Steadfastness of the Servant of Jehovah. (Chap. l.)

Third Prophecy.—The bursting forth of Salvation, and turning away of the Cup of Water. (Chap. li.)

Fourth Prophecy.—Jerusalem exchanges Servitude for Dominion, and Imprisonment for Liberty. (Chap. lii. 1–12.)

Fifth Prophecy.—Golgotha and Sheb-
limini, or the Exaltation of the Servant of Jehovah out of deep Degradation. (Chap. lii. 13–liii.)

Sixth Prophecy.—The Glory of Jerusalem, the church of the Servants of Jehovah. (Chap. liv.)

Seventh Prophecy.—Come and take the sure Salvation of Jehovah. (Chap. lv.)

Eighth Prophecy.—Sabbatical Ad-

monitions and Consolation for Prose-
lytes and Eunuchs. (Chap. lvi. 1, 8.)

Ninth Prophecy.—Neglect of Duty by the Leaders of Israel; and errors of the People. (Chap. lvi. 9–lvii.)

PART III.

First Prophecy.—The False Worship and the True, with the Promises belonging to the latter. (Chap. lviii.)

Second Prophecy.—The Existing Wall of Partition broken down at last. (Chap. lix.)

Third Prophecy.—The Glory of the Jerusalem of the Last Days. (Chap. lx.)

Fourth Prophecy.—The Glory of the Office committed to the Servant of Jehovah. (Chap. lxi.)

Fifth Prophecy.—The gradual Extension of the Glory of Jerusalem. (Chap. lxii.)

Sixth Prophecy.—Judgment upon Edom and upon the whole World that is hostile to the Church. (Chap. lxiii. 1–6.)

THE THREE CLOSING PROPHECIES.

First Closing Prophecy.—Thanksgiving, Confession and Supplication of the Church of the Captivity. (Chap. lxiii 7–l xvi.)

Second Closing Prophecy.—Jehovah's Answer to the Church's Prayer. (Chap. lxvi.)

Third Closing Prophecy.—Exclusion of Scorners from the coming Salvation. (Chap. lxvi.)

THE BIBLE IN MEXICO.—A circular letter from Mexico on the mission work conducted by Dr. Riley, speaks incidentally of the depot of the American Bible Society:

On the left hand, at the corner of the street, we see a large attractive sign bearing the words, "Las Sagradas Escrituras," painted in block letters of white, shaded with gold, on a rich crimson background. In the windows are displayed, in various and attractive bindings, the word of salvation. We notice several persons standing at them, reading from some of the books that lie open for perusal. One of them, evidently an "aquador" or "water-carrier," by the pad he carries on his back, is earnestly reading the Decalogue, and very likely, poor fellow, for the first time in his life. This is the depot of the American Bible Society, lately established here, in a most valuable location on the "Broadway" of Mexico, secured by the energy and judgment of its agent, Dr. Gore, and is beginning to secure a respect and attention that is leading its friends here to hope that a new era is being inaugurated for the Bible cause in this land.—*Bible Society Record.*

Lessons for April.

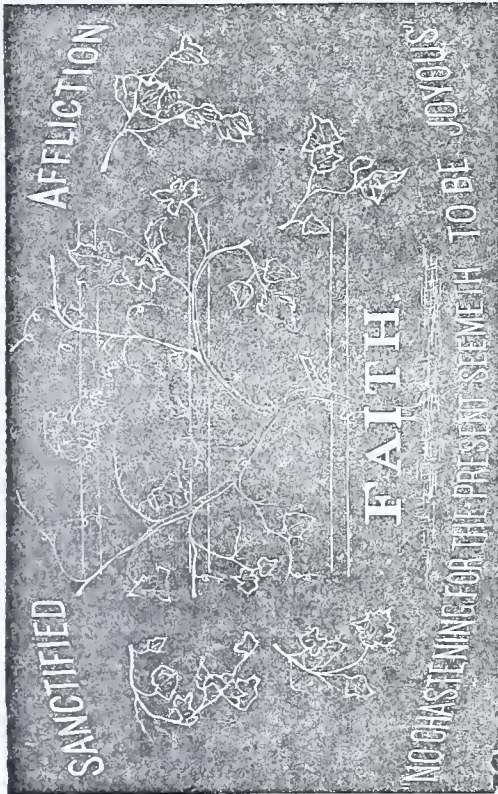
COMMENTS BY PROF. H. L. BAUGHER. BLACKBOARD ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. C. STOCK, CARLISLE.

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION.

April 6.

Job xxxiii. 14-30.

(PALM SUNDAY.)



Explanation.—See John xv. 2. Chastisement is represented by *pruning*. Greater fruitfulness is the aim and result.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON.

The book of Job is, with good reason, and by the overbalancing weight of criticism, regarded as the oldest book in the Bible (unless Genesis be excepted), and so the oldest book in the world. Tradition makes Moses its author. "Our conclusion," says McClintock and Strong's Encyclopedia, Article on Job, "as being the most probable combination of all the facts in the case, is that as a recitative poem in a rudimentary form, it was originally framed in Job's age (by that romance style of composition spontaneous with Orientals), and that in its Arabic dress it was gathered by Moses from the lips of the Midianitish bards

during his residence among them; that it was first composed by him in the Hebrew language, but not reduced to its present complete form till considerably later, perhaps by Solomon." Such a history seems quite reasonable, and is paralleled in the case of other uninspired writings—those of Homer for instance. The book is dramatic in its cast, yet it is framed upon facts that actually occurred. The scene is laid in the land of Uz, supposed to have been somewhere in what is now called Arabia Deserta. Uz was the name of a son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, and the land was probably called from him. The book may be divided into five parts: I. (Chaps. i-iii.), the historical facts; II. (iv-xxxi.), the discussions between Job and his three friends; III. (xxxii-xxxvii.), Elihu's addresses to Job; IV. (xxxviii-xli.), God speaking out of the storm; V. (xlii.), the final result.

Elihu, younger than the three friends, had been an interested listener to the heated controversy between them and Job, and, at the end, was constrained to take sides against both the parties; against the three, because they had not convinced Job or satisfactorily answered his words, yet had condemned him; against Job, because he justified himself rather than God. Our lesson is from his first address to Job, and sets forth several ways of God's dealing with men and his purposes therein.

Warning.

Verse 14. FOR GOD SPEAKETH. Job had complained that God would not answer him. He had challenged the Almighty to explain his doings in the afflictions sent on Job, and fretted himself that he was not answered. See xix. 7; xxx. 20, and preceding verse. Elihu reproves Job for this, and says God does indeed speak to man. ONCE, YEA, TWICE. This is either a general expression, like "once and again," or refers to the two instances following,

viz. by dreams and by sickness. YET MAN PRECEIVETH IT NOT. Man is dull and stupid through sin ; his powers are depraved ; especially is he unperceptive of spiritual things. And this evil result was manifest even thus early after the fall, and is still apparent.

Verses 15 and 16 IN A DREAM, not an ordinary dream arising from some physical disorder, but A VISION OF THE NIGHT, amid DEEP SLEEP. This was one of the "divers manners" in which "in time past" (Heb. i. 1.) God spake unto men, for instance, to Abimelech, (Gen. xx. 3-7), to Laban, (Gen. xxxi. 24), to the chief butler and the chief baker (Gen. xl. 5), to Pharaoh (Gen. xli. 1-8), Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. ii. 1 ; iv. 10-13), to the Magi (Matt. ii. 12) ; also to Abraham, Jacob, Joseph and Solomon, and later to Joseph, Mary's husband. Such methods of communication are found in the earliest age, but are not to be expected in these days of complete revelation and an open Bible. THEN HE OPENETH THE EARS OF MEN, causeth them to hear ; as indicated above, man is naturally dull of hearing, in a spiritual sense. One may have ears to hear and yet not hear. SEALETH THEIR INSTRUCTION. Authenticates, thereby, the teaching intended ; or, thereby impresses it (as a seal) upon them.

Verses 17 and 18. THAT HE MAY WITHDRAW MAN FROM HIS PURPOSE, from his proposed work, which God sees to be evil ; may keep him from mischief. It is a benevolent visitation. AND HIDE PRIDE FROM MAN. Deliver him from that sin ; make him humble. The final purpose in so visiting is to KEEP BACK HIS SOUL FROM THE PIT. His soul is *himself*, his life. Taylor Lewis says "the pit," ordinarily rendered the grave (as in verse 22), "means more than the *grave* or *corruption*. The idea is not distinct, but it is that of some great loss, something terrible connected with the thought of the going out of the life." THE SWORD seems to mean sudden and violent death. The whole connection seems to mean that God visited men in significant dreams to cause his dread to fall upon them, to subdue their natural pride, to chasten them for their good,

that they might not fall into ruin. This was one way of visitation. Another was

Sickness.

Verses 19 and 21. HE IS CHASTENED ALSO WITH PAIN UPON HIS BED. Thus early then it was taught that sickness is a chastening from God's hand. So the Scriptures generally represent it. Even though it be occasioned by our violations of natural law, still God's chastening hand is in the penalty. For he made the laws of nature, and the smart of violation is his rebuke. Though "death," which includes all sickness and suffering, is "the wages of sin" and the consequence thereof, yet this is by the appointment of God. THE MULTITUDE OF HIS BONES WITH STRONG PAIN. This may also be rendered, "And with the unceasing conflict of his limbs," or, "The restlessness of his limbs is constant." These several readings explain the clause. Compare chap. xxx. 17. The sick man ABHORRETH BREAD, his appetite is gone ; even DAINY MEAT, food regarded as particularly nice, is repulsive. "Bread" and "meat" used to be used for all kinds of food. HIS FLESH IS CONSUMED AWAY. He grows thin and pale. THAT IT CANNOT BE SEEN. He becomes the mere skeleton of his former self : even HIS BONES STICK OUT. SOUL and LIFE seem to be used synonymously. THE GRAVE opens before the sick man. Another step will put him in it. THE DESTROYERS. This is generally interpreted of angels of destruction, carrying out the sentence of death. Reference may be made to Ex. xii. 23 ; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16 ; Ps. lxxviii. 49 ; 1 Cor. x. 10, for light on the subject. Taylor Lewis, an eminent scholar and Hebraist, says, "There is in the Old Testament more than one glimpse of a terrific idea, namely, of some outward invisible violence at the death of the wicked, or of invisible powers, whatever may be their character, who are present to take them forcibly away."

Verses 23 and 24. The situation of the sick man is bad indeed ; but yet there is hope ; and these verses express it. IF THERE BE A MESSENGER WITH HIM. Who is meant here by "a messenger" is uncertain. Some refer it

to a human being; others to an angel. The former interpret it of any minister who may come to the sick bed and prove himself a skillful teacher of the right ways of the Lord. The latter say the word used, generally means a superhuman agent, and here is in contrast with the "destroyers" referred to above. The latter seems to us the best supported opinion. Gesenius, Ewald, Delitzsch, Luther, The Speaker's Commentary, and Taylor Lewis, among others, advocate it. This personage is further described as AN INTERPRETER. Delitzsch renders this "a mediator." The Speaker's Commentary says, "The Jewish prayers show that the interpreter was always identified in their minds with the expected Redeemer of Israel." ONE AMONG A THOUSAND. This indicates vast superiority. Such an one is "The Angel of Jehovah," pre-eminent in all the Old Testament, and interpreted by us to refer to the second person of the Godhead, afterwards "manifest in the flesh" as Jesus, the Christ. The next phrase, indicating still further the office of this messenger, TO SHOW UNTO MAN HIS (God's) UPRIGHTNESS, is confirmatory of the view that makes the messenger here divine. Compare Rom. iii. 25, 26, where the Apostle represents Jesus as set forth by God "to declare his righteousness." Now it is true the utterer of this sentiment lived in patriarchal times, before Israel became a people; and, indeed, we cannot suppose him to have had that clearness of view concerning the Redeemer which belongs to our "fullness of time," those days in which "God hath spoken to us by his Son;" yet that age was not left without divine light, and there were prefigurements of things to come, and utterances which, though perhaps not fully comprehended by those who spake them, we find interpreted and fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Some however, gather nothing more from this verse than that some messenger, like Elihu, some prophet or teacher, will go to the sick man and explain God's providence, that he chastens and leads to repentance by sickness: and so he will lead him to submission and a condition in which God can graciously

restore him. The sentence then comes graciously from him with whom are the issues of life, DELIVER HIM FROM GOING DOWN TO THE PIT—(see in verse 18)—I HAVE FOUND A RANSOM, a means of deliverance. "The pit" and natural death are the prefigurements of everlasting destruction; and in the ransom here spoken of an anticipation of the idea in Heb. ix. 12. Compare Matt. viii. 17; xx. 28. Hence the possibility of

Recovery.

Verses 25 and 26. How beautifully return to health is expressed in the first of these verses! HE SHALL PRAY UNTO GOD, having by his sickness been brought nigh to him and instructed. Now, with returning vigor, he will not forget his gracious God, but pours out his soul in thanksgiving. HE SHALL SEE HIS (God's) FACE WITH JOY. He will see the light of His countenance shining upon him; will realize that God chastens out of love, for our good, not for any gratification of Himself. HE WILL RENDER UNTO MAN HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Will count him just, justify him.

Verses 27 and 28. These two verses are better translated by recent commentators than by King James' revision, our present English Bible. The Speaker's Commentary translates them thus: "He (that is, the restored penitent) will sing unto men, and say, I had sinned and perverted that which was right, and it was not requited to me. He redeemed my soul from passing into the pit, and my life beholdeth the light with joy." Delitzsch renders them thus: "He singeth to men and saith: 'I had sinned and perverted what was straight, and it was not recompensed to me. He hath delivered my soul from going down into the pit, and my life rejoiceth in the light.'" Evidently the sense is that the sick man, his recovery beginning, acknowledges his sins while he praises God for his deliverance.

Verses 29 and 30. THUS, as described in previous verses. OFTENTIMES. *Twice, thrice*, the margin has it; meaning either in the several ways just spoken of, or in general, *in various ways*. WORKETH, *dealeth*, GOD WITH MAN.

Elihu sees divine providence in the affairs of life ; and all with the gracious intention TO BRING BACK HIS SOUL FROM THE PIT, TO BE ENLIGHTENED WITH THE LIGHT OF THE LIVING. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." Affliction in this life is not punishment, but chastisement, intended to make us better, to keep us, indeed, from punishment, which is meted out in the world to come.

There is much about the ministry of affliction which we do not understand. There can, however, be no mistake about its being used by God, and for man's good. "It was good for me," says the Psalmist, "that I have been afflicted. Before I was afflicted I went astray ; but now do I keep thy law." It is said even of our Lord himself (Heb. v. 8), "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." He became "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and that "more than any man." (Is. lii. 14 ; liii.) Though we go to-day with the multitude who waved palm branches and cried "Hosanna," hailing him King, yet this is but the beginning of "Passion Week," that chronicles such sufferings, and of such a one, as were never known before or since—such as we cannot fully appreciate. The way to the mediatorial throne is *by the cross*. See Phil. ii. 5, 11. And we are called to be here partakers of his sufferings—Rom. viii. 17 ; 2 Cor. i. 7, 5 4, 10 ; Phil. iii. 10 ; Col. i. 24 ; 2 Tim. ii. 12 ; 1 Peter iv. 13, 5, 10—and there of his glory. The path to glory is all marked by suffering. St. John (Rev. i. 9,) styles himself, "Your brother and companion in the kingdom, and patience of Jesus Christ." May we all have grace to "suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

Reflections.

1. God does not speak in answer to our *whims*, or to our *challenge* of his ways ; yet doth he speak "once, yea, twice"—"oftentimes" ; it becomes us to keep an open, listening ear, to hear and heed what he says. Listen to God's providence, and be reconciled to it.

2. It is a pity to have the suffering without the benefit intended and derivable therefrom. A man will have a

dangerous wound probed, manfully bearing the pain, or will have a limb cut off, to save his life ; but if, after all the pain of the surgical operation, he dies—what a pity ! So, in this world, we are called to suffer affliction in various ways—what a pity if we get no good from it, if it do not lead us on to glory and to God !

3. Good people are not afflicted because they are good ; rather are they good because they have been afflicted.

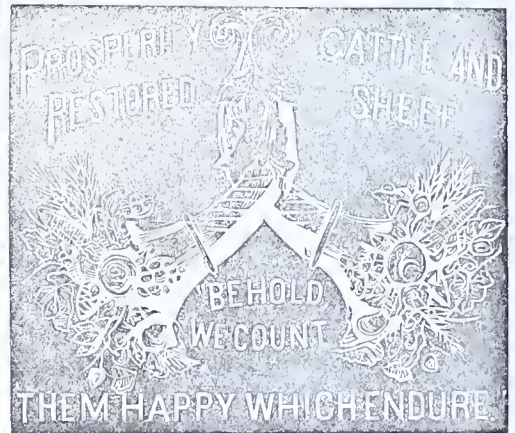
4. Let us distinguish between chastisement and punishment. The former is in this world ; the latter in the world to come.

PROSPERITY RESTORED.

April 13.

Job xlii. 1—10.

(EASTER.)



Explanation.—The cornucopia represents abundance ; the two represent the "twice as much as he had before" which was bestowed on Job. Both *peace* and *plenty* are, also, here represented. Outward prosperity, in Old Testament times more than now, represented God's favor.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON.

Elihu continued for some time to justify the ways of God to Job, without interruption, though several times Job seemed disposed to say something. As Elihu proceeded, a thunder storm rapidly gathered and came on over the desert, and Elihu pointed out its various phenomena as so many manifestations of the greatness and power of God. It is one of the finest descriptions of a storm that can be found in any literature. At last the storm became so appalling, that, after one or two pauses and vain attempts to continue, Elihu stopped, utterly unable to proceed. At this moment, out of the heart of the

storm, Jehovah himself spoke to Job, reproving him, and challenging him to answer him. He then set forth, with more or less of detail, some of the greatest and most wonderful of the works of the Creator, for Job's consideration. For grandeur of language and style, and for magnificence of description, these chapters are unequalled. Their connection with the preceding discussion between Job and his friends is not indicated in so many words, but is evidently this: By these wondrous works of the Creator, testifying his wisdom and power, is plainly set forth the absolute sovereignty of God, and his perfect right to govern the world according to his own holy will, and the duty of man to submit to his government with unquestioning and trusting obedience. Job was so affected by the divine language, that at the first pause he hastened to express humility and repentance for his rebellious feelings and speeches. But the voice of God resumed its descriptions with increased eloquence and force. It is at the moment of its finally ceasing that this lesson begins. (*Todd's Notes.*)

Acknowledgment.

Verse 1. THEN JOB ANSWERED THE LORD. We are now at the last Act of this wonderful Drama of Job. Jehovah himself, hitherto apparently not regarding his servant's entreaties, had at last manifestly come nigh, and, disdaining to explain himself at this creature's challenge, yet had in word and works declared his wisdom and might and summoned Job to make answer, if he could. Here we have his answer.

Verse 2. I KNOW THAT THOU CANST DO EVERYTHING. The coming near, in power, of the Almighty, has made the before complaining creature feel his insignificance and lie abashed before the Lord. So Moses "hid his face" at the burning bush (Ex. iii. 6,) and at Sinai said, "I exceedingly fear and quake" (Heb. xii. 21), and Elijah "wrapped his face in his mantle" (1 Kings xix. 13). Personal omnipotence, over against tendencies to fatality that had affected him, induced by the seeming inequalities in the different lot of men, now forcibly impresses Job. What if God had not argued at all with him the

questions that had been so warmly handled between him and his friends! Here now God appears too great for such as Job in any way to call in question. The answer is, "Be still and know that I am God." Paul uses it in Rom. ix. 20, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" This does not satisfy proud reason or the natural heart; but it is an answer to faith. NO THOUGHT of thine CAN BE WITHHOLDEN FROM THEE, that is, hindered, prevented from coming to pass. This clause repeats the idea of omnipotence expressed in the former. Three Sundays ago we had from the beautiful 139th Psalm the attributes of Omnipresence and Omniscience set forth as belonging to God. Here we have, from the earlier period of the patriarchs, an expression of his Omnipotence, and the impression produced by a sense of it upon a prince among men. Let it be remembered that the possession of one *infinite* attribute implies that all that one's attributes are infinite.

Verse 3. Didst thou say (xxxviii. 2), WHO IS HE THAT HIDETH COUNSEL WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE, that darkeneth God's deep and wise plans by wrong words, putting his ways in a false light; I am he that has done this: I HAVE UTTERED THAT (what) I UNDERSTOOD NOT; THINGS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME, WHICH I KNEW NOT. He refers to his judgment concerning his afflictions, his arraignment of God and presumptuous utterances. See previous chapters for specimens thereof. He had been provoked by the false views of his "friends;" the heat of controversy had inflamed him to say more than he otherwise would have done. We are in danger also of being thus prompted to hasty utterances about things too wonderful for us, the great things of God's nature and his Providence. With all our boasted knowledge, whether of nature or of revelation, we are too ignorant to sit in judgment on God's dealings. It is a primary principle in argument that ignorance cannot make an objection.

Verse 4. HEAR, I BESEECH THEE, AND I WILL SPEAK. God had challenged

him to answer. He now does this very humbly, the arrogance of former words being entirely put aside. I WILL DEMAND OF THEE, AND DECLARE THOU UNTO ME. This is another quotation from the opening of the speech of Jehovah (Chap. xxxviii. 3). We are not to understand that Job here expresses a wish to ask God something, as some scholars suppose; for Job does not go on to ask anything, and he is evidently not in a mood for any such thing. He quotes these words just as he does those in the preceding verse, with an interrogation, or as an exclamation in a kind of half soliloquy: "Dost thou say, I will demand of thee, and answer thou me? This, then, which follows is all the answer that I have to make." (*Todd's Notes.*)

Verse 5. I HAVE HEARD OF THEE BY THE HEARING OF THE EAR. By tradition, by instruction. He had been educated in the knowledge of God. BUT NOW MINE EYE SEETH THEE. This is to be taken not with physical literalness. A common proverb is, seeing is believing. The testimony of our own eyes is more satisfactory than reports received from others. Job says his apprehension of God now, in comparison with what it had been, is as though he had *seen* what before he only *heard of*. "Whereas I was blind" (comparatively), "now I see!" Jehovah's drawing nigh and speaking to him out of the whirlwind was the cause of this change.

Verse 6. WHEREFORE I ABHORM MYSELF. So said Isaiah, on an occasion of God's manifesting himself in an extraordinary way (Is. vi. 5); "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Man's conceit of himself and his opinions cannot stand before the might and light of eternal truth. AND REPENT IN DUST AND ASHES. He had betaken himself to dust and ashes because of his sore affliction; now he makes these the symbol of his penitence. He lies abashed before the Lord. He surrenders, submits. A broken and contrite heart God will not despise. Therefore Job's humble acknowledgment was followed by

Reconciliation.

Verse 7. Job was the principal human character of this drama. To him first Jehovah speaks and deigns to manifest himself in convincing power. Job is humbled and makes acknowledgment. Is this then a triumph of the three friends and their justification? Kitto represents them as complacently stroking their beards as the Lord seemed to be taking their side of the argument. But the tables are now turned. To ELIPHAZ, of Teman in Idumea, the oldest, most moderate, and leading one of the controversialists, Jehovah now addressed himself and said: MY WRATH IS KINDLED AGAINST THEE, AND AGAINST THY TWO FRIENDS. So, then, God was not on their side, after all. Two wrongs never make a right. Both sides were wrong in their views. Yet, comparatively, Job's positions were more tenable than theirs. YE HAVE NOT SPOKEN OF ME RIGHT, AS MY SERVANT JOB. There is some difficulty in explaining this, since Job had uttered what he understood not, and darkened God's counsel in his providences without knowledge. However the friends' whole course was improper; they had not *improved* Job's afflictions for his good, but become controversialists and provoked the poor, tormented sufferer to speak rashly. If they had presented proper views of God and his providence, Job might have been saved from thus sinning. Moreover, Job's general statements about God were more correct than those of his friends. And now he had confessed his sin, and "had put this part of the charge against him out of count by his penitent confession" (*Kitto*), whereas the friends were even now exultant, as though they had been right all along. God, therefore, directly indicates his displeasure at them.

Verse 8. THEREFORE TAKE UNTO YOU NOW SEVEN BULLOCKS AND SEVEN RAMS. Here is one of the earliest instances of sacrifices for atonement. *Seven* was the number of perfection, and Todd notices that this "was precisely the offering made by Balak, King of Moab, one of the countries neighboring to the land of Uz (Num. xxiii. 1)." AND GO TO MY SERVANT JOB. See what God here calls the persecuted one,

owning him his servant. MY SERVANT JOB SHALL PRAY FOR YOU. Here again the afflicted man is vindicated. He is made the intercessor for them that falsely charged wicked character upon him. FOR HIM WILL I ACCEPT. All this tended to humble them, and, whilst vindicating Job from their taunts, led him to forgive as he hoped to be forgiven. All are humbled before being lifted up. FOLLY. So God terms what they vainly supposed was wisdom.

Verse 9. Bildad was called the SHUHITE because he was prince or patriarch of Shuah in Arabia Petraea, a district called from Shuah, the sixth son of Abraham and Keturah. Zophar was a NAAMATHITE,—from some now unknown place called Naamah. DID ACCORDING AS THE LORD COMMANDED THEM. They seem to have been right at heart though far from right in their views and expressions. However humbling the command, they obey. THE LORD ALSO ACCEPTED JOB and was merciful to them. These were early days in which there were no appointed priests; the patriarch was priest in his own house; as we find Job to have been from Chap. i. 5.

Verse 10. Job's afflictions, by a natural figure of speech, are called his CAPTIVITY; and his deliverance therefrom a *turning* of it. WHEN HE PRAYED FOR HIS FRIENDS. Not *because* he did this, but *when* he did it. "When ye stand praying," says our Lord himself, "forgive, if ye have aught against any." THE LORD GAVE JOB TWICE AS MUCH AS HE HAD BEFORE. This was an outward token of the Lord's favor. Of course this double did not come all at once, but was the growth of time. Job lived 140 years longer. It is noticeable that he had the *same* number of sons and daughters as before, not *twice* as many; and from this it is implied that the former children, killed by the storm, were not lost; so that he really had also twice as many sons and daughters. St. James says (v. 11) "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

In the past week we have considered the afflictions and patience of a greater than Job. Jesus was misunderstood and abused. He was esteemed "stricken of God." "He trusted in God," said his revilers, as he hung upon the cross, "that he would deliver him. Let him deliver him now, if he will have him." And though not as they intended or challenged, yet God did deliver him, and lo, he comes off Conqueror of death and hell, and is acknowledged through all the universe as Jesus Christ, the righteous. "Put to death in the flesh," he was "justified in the spirit;" and has become the "author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Delitzsch says of the book from which our lesson is taken, "The final teaching of the book is that sufferings are for the righteous man the way to glory; and that his faith is the way to sight." This can be well coupled with and illustrated by the passion and consequent glory of Christ. Christ was both our Redeemer and pattern.

Reflections.

1. In these days too, and sometimes even in the pulpit, men hide God's counsel by words without knowledge, and talk flippantly about things too wonderful for them. Some talk as though they could comprehend God, even as though they had given, or could give him, advice. Let them study Job, and beware!

2. When God draws near in his Almightyness, how the proud opinions of men will change!

3. God used his works in nature to instruct Job concerning his being and perfections. There are those among men who use these works to deny both these.

4. 'Tis a very bad thing to defend a good cause by bad arguments. God wants no allies but such as are of *the truth*.

5. We cannot remain enemies or unfriendly to those for whom we pray. There is philosophy as well as religion in the admonition, "pray for them that persecute you."

6. Upon many things said in controversy, though spoken to defend God, God writes "Folly" as his estimate.

QUEEN ESTHER.

April 20.

Esther iv. 10-17.



OUTLINE.

Grand Feast. I: 1-12.
 General Decree. III: 1-15.
 Great Mourning. IV: 3.
 Golden Scepter. IV: 10-12.
 Great Danger. IV: 13, 14.
 Good Resolution. IV: 15-17.
 Glorious Deliverance. V-X.

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON.

The book of Esther takes its name from one of its principal characters. Her Hebrew name was Hadassah, meaning *myrtle*; her Persian name was Esther, meaning *star*, and perhaps of kindred origin with the Syrian Ashtoreth. Keil says, "No certain information concerning the *author* of this book is attainable." He entirely rejects the idea that Mordecai was the author, but favors the view that the author lived, not in Palestine, but in the more northern provinces of the Persian realm, probably in Susa itself. It is evidently drawn largely from the annals of the Persian kings, which profane history also tells us were carefully kept. The King Ahasuerus is now generally acknowledged to have been Xerxes, the Great, who reigned from 485 to 464 B. C., and the events recorded occurred in the interval between the time referred to in the 6th chapter of Ezra and that of the events of the 7th chapter. The great feast in the 3d year of Xerxes' reign, dating the time of Vashti's deposition as queen, fits well the time of that monarch's inaugurating the third Persian invasion of Greece, when the largest army that ever was known, estimated in all at over 5,000,000, was led against that little country, made great by history and art. Although successful at Thermopylæ and in occupying Athens, yet after all the Persian king returned inglorious, with but a handful of the host he had set out with, and in his seventh year we find him at Susa, his capital, again, seeking to drown his military disappointment in the

pleasures of his seraglio. How Esther came to be queen is recited in the 2d chapter, where we get a glimpse of the power and sensuality of an oriental despot. Esther was an orphan, adopted and raised by her cousin Mordecai, a Benjamite Jew. He seems to have had some office at the court: at all events he kept where he could still exercise a paternal influence over Esther, who was loving and obedient to her foster-father. Presently Haman, a princely descendant of the Amalekites, traditional enemies of the Jews, became Xerxes' prime minister, and all were ordered to do him reverence. Whether from religious scruples or from contempt, Mordecai failed to prostrate himself before the prime minister. When Haman's attention was called to this he became very angry, and, scorning to lay hands on feeble, insignificant Mordecai alone, determined to take vengeance on the whole race of Jews. Xerxes did not care for human life, and arbitrarily granted his favorite's request and gave the Jews of his whole realm entirely over to Haman's wrath. The latter, being as superstitious as he was unscrupulous, cast lots for a lucky day and month in which to carry out his murderous design. "The lot is cast into the lap," say the Scriptures, "but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord;" and, mindful of his covenant people, God made the lot to fall as late as the middle of the twelfth month, nearly a year off. So there was time to take measures to frustrate Haman's murderous design. The order for the murder of the Jews (iii. 13) had been sent post haste throughout all the vast Persian Empire, "to every people after their language," and not only "was the city Shushan perplexed," but a great lamentation arose wherever there were Jews. Mordecai put on sackcloth and ashes, and rent his clothes and cried aloud in the city, and went as near the palace gate as he dare—for no sight or sound of sorrow dare come *within* those gates—to catch the gaze of his Esther. And he was observed and reported to the queen, who, ignorant of the decree that had been made, was grieved at Mordecai's

appearance and sent him other raiment, but he refused to put it on. Then the queen sent one of her attendants, Hatach, to inquire of Mordecai the cause of his sorrow. So he sent back the alarming news to the queen with a copy of the murderous decree, and earnestly charged upon her the office of intercessor for her people.

The Danger

was great; for everybody was authorized to fall, at the time appointed, upon "Jews, young and old, little children and women," wherever found throughout the vast empire, which reached from India to the regions beyond Egypt, and included Judea among its provinces. Now, we know how prevalent and how strong people's prejudices now are against Jews, and we have reason to believe it existed in olden times also, and there would not be wanting plenty to embrace the opportunity of wreaking their wrath upon this devoted people; especially as their wealth was to be a prey to the spoilers. There was great personal danger, too, in the part which Mordecai urged Esther to take, and our lesson opens with the word she sent to her foster-father to that effect.

Verse 10. ESTHER SPAKE UNTO HATACH. Although the women of the East were not kept in as strict seclusion as they have been in later days, yet they were far from having the freedom accorded with one consent to women among us. HATACH, a eunuch put in charge of her apartments, was the medium of Esther's communication with Mordecai.

Verse 11. Esther pleads a law well known by everybody making it a capital offense to come unbidden into the king's presence. The Persian king was regarded as almost a god, and access to him was made very difficult. He transacted his business through his ministers. WHOSOEVER, WHETHER MAN OR WOMAN, intruded INTO THE INNER COURT, the presence chamber of the king, ONE LAW was pitilessly and irrevocably fixed for all, TO PUT TO DEATH that presumptuous person. EXCEPT SUCH TO WHOM THE KING SHALL HOLD OUT THE GOLDEN SCEPTRE, the rod or wand, badge of office, which the king

was accustomed always to have in his right hand. It is represented in pictures that have come down to us as about equal in length to the height of the king's person. The reaching out of this to one coming in was an expression of the king's favor that relieved from the penalty pronounced in the law. It may well be believed that those absolute despots had the seclusion intended, and that none were so venturesome as to approach them unbidden. To add to Esther's difficulty she had NOT BEEN CALLED TO COME IN UNTO THE KING THESE THIRTY DAYS. Was she no longer a favorite? Could she expect royal favor? Was it not this king who had deposed Vashti, and in whose reign the question of woman's prerogatives was settled against her? And if she announced herself, requesting an audience, would she not likely be refused? Xerxes' character was no improvement upon the general reputation of Persian despots. Rawlinson says of him: "Proud, self-willed, amorous, careless of contravening Persian customs, reckless of human life, yet not actually bloodthirsty, impetuous, facile, changeable—the Ahasuerus of Esther corresponds in all respects to the Greek portraiture of Xerxes, which is not the mere picture of an Oriental despot, but has various marked peculiarities that distinctly individualize it. The monarch who scourged the sea, and offered human victims in sacrifice, might well outrage Persian feeling by requiring Vashti to present herself unveiled before his courtiers. The prince who gave a sister-in-law, whom he had professed to love, into the power of a favorite wife to torture and mutilate, would naturally not shrink from handing over a tribe for which he had no regard, to the tender mercies of a favorite minister." It was to such a king that Esther was desired to make supplication. Who will say her personal risk was small?

The Warning.

But either way she was in danger; and Mordecai warned her of what would come upon her if she refused to intercede.

Verse 13. THINK NOT WITH THYSELF, do not indulge the thought, he sent her word back, THAT THOU, a Jewess, one

of the proscribed, SHALT ESCAPE by being IN THE KING'S HOUSE. Her nationality seems not to have been known as yet, or thought of at the time; but Mordecai intimates that there will be hands ready to fall upon her too in the general permit of destruction.

Verse 14. FOR IF THOU ALTOGETHER HOLDEST THY PEACE AT THIS TIME, no matter from what considerations, ENLARGEMENT, a way out of these straits, AND DELIVERANCE SHALL ARISE TO THE JEWS FROM ANOTHER PLACE. This seems to be a general expression of faith that God would certainly provide for his people in this dire extremity, though he did not know just how. This he might gather from the prophecies. Though Mordecai was now living among the heathen, yet it is quite likely that he was subsequently one of the leaders of the returning exiles. See Ezra ii. 2, Neh. vii. 7, where the name occurs. We suppose him, then, to have been a patriotic and hopeful Jew. AND WHO KNOWETH WHETHER THOU ART COME TO THE KINGDOM, hast attained to royalty, FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS, for the very purpose of now defeating Haman's wicked plot. He intimates God's providence for this very occasion as manifest in her exaltation as queen.

The Resolve.

Verses 15 and 16. The young queen's mind is soon made up. Religious sense of duty, love to her foster-father and to her people, prevail against all the odds of danger. So she sends word to Mordecai, GO, GATHER TOGETHER ALL THE JEWS IN SHUSHAN—and there were not a few in the capital—AND FAST YE FOR ME. This implied prayer, waiting upon the true and living God, the God of the covenant. Haman resorts to the lot: Esther to fasting and prayer. I ALSO AND MY MAIDENS, my attendants, WILL FAST LIKEWISE. AND SO, thus prepared and having thus appealed to the God in whose hands are the destinies of men, WILL I GO IN UNTO THE KING, WHICH IS NOT ACCORDING TO THE LAW, and therefore so hazardous: AND IF I PERISH, I PERISH—language expressive of entire submission to God's will and providence, the utterance of noble heroism, true moral courage. How our hearts go with her in the bold attempt!

The rest of the book tells how it fared with her, how Haman's plot was foiled and himself hung on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai, and how the latter was made "next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people and speaking peace to all his seed." The whole book is full of lessons illustrating God's providence for his people and against his and their adversaries.

Reflections.

1. Although the *name* of God does not once occur in this whole book, he is there on every hand caring for the interests of his people. It makes little difference whether the *name* of God and Christ be in the Constitution of the United States, if his love and fear find due place in the hearts of our rulers and people. The presence of God's name or names there could not make the country godly or Christian, nor does their absence make it ungodly and heathen.

2. The massacre of St. Bartholomew's day illustrates what might have come of Haman's plot, had it not been frustrated.

3. Luther's determination, against protests on every hand, to go to Worms, though there were as many devils there as there were tiles on the roofs of the houses, was a resolve like Esther's.

4. Extra occasions call for extra hazards.

5. The hymn, "Come, humble sinner, in whose breast A thousand thoughts revolve," based upon part of our lesson, presents a very false view in likening the blessed Jesus to Xerxes, the Persian despot, and the guilty sinner to the innocent Esther. Some things in it are very pretty, some very false. If sung at all, the objectionable stanzas should be omitted.

6. In following the subsequent history, let not Esther or her people be accused of cruelty and revenge. The original decree could not be revoked, Persian laws being irrevocable; and all that the Jews asked and got was the privilege to *defend themselves* when attacked. It was in *doing this* that they slew so many throughout the vast empire.

THE COMING SAVIOUR.

April 27.

Isaiah xlii. 1-10.



COMMENTS ON THE LESSON.

Isaiah (called in Greek *Esaias*,) was the son of Amoz, and prophesied in Jerusalem in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah (chapter i. 1). His prophetic office extended over a period of from 47 to 62 years, the latter date including the last half of Hezekiah's reign and bringing the prophet down to the days of Manasseh (698), by whom tradition says he was sawn asunder (comp. Heb. xi. 37) at the mercy-pleading age of 80 years. Hosea, Amos and Micah were his contemporaries. "Isaiah's character stands before us as one of almost superhuman elevation. When we think of him during those sixty years, discharging so many varied offices, expostulating, reproving, expounding, comforting, doing all with deepest resignation and unfaltering faith towards God, and with serene dignity towards men, we seem to be contemplating one, who, while retaining all purely human sympathies, has a portion of seraphic nature communicated to him" (*Speaker's Commentary*) Isaiah has been called The Evangelical Prophet, because there is so much of the *evangel*, or good news of a Saviour, in his writings. His name means "the salvation of the Lord," and of this subject the book that bears his name is full. In our lesson to-day we have the coming Saviour.

Introduced and Described.

Verse 1. BEHOLD. There is a "behold" in the last verse of the preceding chapter, calling attention to the vanity, the nothingness of the objects of heathen trust and worship. In con-

trast with their inability to counsel or to help, Jehovah speaks to Israel, introducing the Christ, and says, BEHOLD MY SERVANT. That this refers to Jesus, the Christ, is proved from Matt. xii. 16-21, where this passage is quoted. In some places, as in xli. 8, Israel is called by this title, "my servant." The context generally makes plain to whom reference is made. On this, Delitzsch says, "Israel's true nature as a servant of God, which had its roots in the election and calling of Jehovah, and manifested itself in conduct and action in harmony with this calling, is all concentrated in him, the One, as its ripest fruit. The gracious purposes of God towards the whole human race, which were manifested even in the election of Israel, are brought by him to their full completion." WHOM I UPHOLD. Compare John v. 19, 20, and that word of our Lord (John xvi. 32.) "And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." God stood by his Son when he came to do the Father's will. MINE ELECT or *chosen* one. Compare I Peter ii. 4, 5. IN WHOM MY SOUL DELIGHTETH. So at Jesus' baptism and at his transfiguration there came a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." I HAVE PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM. "Conceived by the Holy Ghost," the Holy Ghost descended upon him at his baptism, and remained upon him, given, "not by measure," unto him. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost," said John. "In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." HE SHALL BRING FORTH JUDGMENT, institute right religion. TO THE GENTILES. Among the nations that know not God, yet by their very longings and endeavors are feeling after him.

Verse 2. HE SHALL NOT CRY aloud, NOR LIFT UP his voice, NOR CAUSE HIS VOICE TO BE HEARD IN THE STREET. This negatively describes the course of God's servant. "Although," says Delitzsch, "he is certain of his divine call, and brings to the nations the highest and best, his manner of appearing is nevertheless quiet, gentle and humble; the very opposite of those lying teachers, who endeavored to exalt

themselves by noisy demonstrations. He does not seek his own, and therefore denies himself; he brings what commends itself, and therefore requires no forced trumpeting." Accordingly, we find Jesus frequenting the synagogues and temple, and preaching there rather than in the streets; and when the multitudes gathered around him he taught them quietly, and, when they were disposed to make demonstrations in his favor, he withdrew from them. It was this quiet, humble, unostentatious manner, indicating a consciousness of the merits of his cause, that the spirit of the applause-loving Pharisees could not brook.

Verse 3. A BRUISED REED SHALL HE NOT BREAK. A reed or rush, growing up out of any moist place, is a common emblem of weakness and frailty. Now add the idea of its being "bruised," half broken already, and how vivid the figure is. SMOKING FLAX is the wick protruding from one of those ancient flat bowls, used as lamps, faintly burning, ready to go out. This forcibly represents feeble life. Now that he will not completely break the almost broken reed nor utterly quench the glimmering wick, sets forth the tenderness of the coming Saviour in dealing with men. Weak faith and piety he will not scorn, but strengthen and kindle into better life. He will come to save, not to destroy. See this fulfilled in Jesus' whole ministry. Severe as he was upon hypocrites and hopeless characters, he ever helped all who were struggling towards or capable of better character. Read Math ix; xi. 25-30; xv. 21-38; xxvi. 6-13; Mark ix. 14-29; Luke vii. 36-50; xix. 1-10; John viii. 2-11. HE SHALL BRING FORTH JUDGEMENT UNTO TRUTH, or according to truth; he will set forth religion in the right way, and hence it will be "unto victory," as Matthew has it, for right ways will finally triumph over all falsity.

Verse 4. HE SHALL NOT FAIL NOR BE DISCOURAGED. The verbs here are from the same stem as the words rendered "bruised" and "smoking" in verse 3. There he would not destroy; here he will not be destroyed. He will prevail; he will not be weak as a

bruised reed, or show the feeble light of a glimmering wick. TILL HE HAVE SET JUDGEMENT IN THE EARTH, established the institutions of right religion. This he has done in the church. THE ISLES, perhaps, with the previous term "earth" filling out the idea of the whole world, SHALL WAIT FOR HIS LAW. Paul in Rom. viii. 19-23 represents this waiting as the groaning and travailing of creation in the desire and expectation of something better. "His law" is the only better thing; that is restored harmony with God, which comes only by Christ. See this combination of "earth" and "isles" to represent the whole world, in Psalm xcvi. 1. The Septuagint (Greek version of the Bible) has for this clause the words, "In his name shall the Gentiles trust," and is so quoted by Matthew (xii. 21). In history we can certainly find *islands* enough in which this prophecy has been fulfilled—the British Isles, Sandwich Islands, Madagascar, South Sea Islands, and many others—but the term is generally interpreted, as above, to refer to any distant parts of the world, to be reached by crossing over the water.

These four verses, then, introduce to Israel, and through him to the world, the coming Saviour as a servant (he "took the form of a servant," Phil. ii.), well pleasing to God and filled with his spirit; speak of the manner of his working, and declare the extent and permanence of his work. In the next three we read of him as

Called and Commissioned.

Verse 1. We have already observed the connection of this chapter with the preceding, contrasting the true God and his doings with the idols of the heathen and their nothingness. In like manner here GOD THE LORD, who speaks, is described in terms that set forth his greatness and power. HE THAT CREATED THE HEAVENS AND STRETCHED THEM OUT. See Gen. i. 6, where "firmament" means *expanse*. Sometimes the heavens are represented as a curtain. (xl. 22; Ps. civ. 2.) SPREAD FORTH THE EARTH, as a carpet, and caused THAT WHICH COMETH OUT OF IT, its products. THAT GIVETH BREATH—a word in the original applied to the self-conscious spirit of man—

UNTO THE PEOPLE UPON IT, the human race, AND SPIRIT—a word applied to all kinds of animals—TO THEM THAT WALK THEREIN. That is, as we say in the Creed, “God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,” source of all being and life. Cowles notices that the verbs used in this verse are in the present tense, and infers therefrom that God’s upholding as well as creating power is included in the representation.

Verse 6. It is of such a God, *the only* God, that the coming Saviour is represented as the servant and chosen one. To his servant this Almighty God now says, I THE LORD HAVE CALLED THEE (compare John iii. 16) IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, in accordance with my righteous plan (*Speaker’s Commentary*). “It signifies just the same as what we should call in New Testament phraseology the *holy love* of God, which, because it is a *holy* love, has wrath against its despisers as its obverse side, but which acts towards men not according to the law of works, but according to the law of grace.” (*Delitzsch*.) WILL HOLD THINE HAND AND WILL KEEP THEE. A pledge of security. We find a sense of God’s presence and support running through the whole history of Jesus’ life on earth. FOR A COVENANT OF THE PEOPLE, or with the people, a new covenant of grace as Jesus said, “This is the new testament in my blood;” and Jesus is called “the mediator of the new covenant.” God’s saving covenant with men is in Jesus the Christ. FOR A LIGHT OF THE GENTILES. The Gentiles are in darkness; God’s servant shall bring them light, by showing them God and his salvation. “The people,” in contrast with “the Gentiles,” are the Jews, the chosen people. But here is foretold what has been so remarkably fulfilled, that the salvation which is of the Jews, would be made known among all nations for the acceptance of faith. Jesus Christ is the light of the world. See Acts xiii, 47, in this connection.

Verse 7. On this verse compare Ps. cxlvi. 7, 8; Zech. ix. 11, 12; Matt. xi. 2–5; Acts xxvi. 17, 18; 2 Tim. ii. 26; Heb. ii. 14, 15. Jesus did not go in

person to the Gentiles, but gave power to his apostles to work such miracles among them. Yet the reference of the verse is much deeper, all outward and physical affliction and pain being but a faint reflection of the condition of the heart. It is the eyes of men’s understanding chiefly that need to be opened, and the prisoners of Satan that need deliverance, and the darkness of our sinful state with its prospects from which we need to be brought out. Jesus was sent to do this, and does it for all who will let him.

Verse 8. I AM THE LORD: THAT IS MY NAME. Wherever in the Old Testament the words “the Lord” are printed, as here, in small capitals, the original word is *Jehovah*, a name derived from the Hebrew verb corresponding to our substantive verb *to be*. This name signifies his self-existence, which involves immutability and eternity. See Ex. iii. 14. MY GLORY WILL I NOT GIVE TO ANOTHER. For there is no other to whom it could rightly and truthfully be given. When God is represented as jealous of his own attributes and the adoration belonging to their possessor, he is only represented as seeking for the maintenance of truth and right. God *must*, from his very nature, perfect as it is, defend his own honor and glory. Otherwise truth would fail and the foundations be removed. NEITHER MY PRAISE, adoration that belongs to me, TO GRAVEN IMAGES, idols of every kind. “The general doctrine of the verse is that true and false religion cannot co-exist” (*Alexander*).

Verse 9. The agreement in this verse, elsewhere in many places presented, is from the fulfilment of prophecy. BEHOLD, THE FORMER THINGS, things before foretold, ARE COME TO PASS, and this is evidence that the NEW THINGS, now declared concerning Israel and the Gentiles, and including the great salvation, will also be realized. Jehovah pledges himself by his very name and being. BEFORE THEY SPRING FORTH, show any signs of existence, I TELL YOU OF THEM. No false god ever did this, or could do it.

Verse 10. A NEW SONG because of

the "new things," and these the things that accompany salvation, need manifestations of God's power and goodness, is now called for FROM THE END OF THE EARTH, from remotest quarters, and everybody is called to join therein. YE THAT GO DOWN TO THE SEA that encompasses all; it was by going down to the sea that this "end of the earth" in which we live was reached, and by so going down men have reached the uttermost parts of the earth. ALL THAT IS THEREIN. The fulness thereof; THE ISLES with THE INHABITANTS THEREOF. Let everything that hath breath take up this song; for it is UNTO THE LORD and to HIS PRAISE: and it is kindred to the "new song" of the redeemed in heaven: it is the song of the Redeemer's praise.

Reflections.

1. There are a good many now-a-days who cry aloud and lift up their voice in the street or anywhere else where

they can attract notice—and yet, sometimes, such profess to be Evangelists and great workers for Jesus. The question arises—whom do they follow?

2. Creation is very distinctly declared in the Scriptures, and repeatedly adduced in honor and praise of God; the manner of the exercise of this infinite power is nowhere detailed. It is this latter that bothers scientists. We may be satisfied with the fact, and little concerned about the manner. "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy."

3. History confirms our lesson. We now celebrate the Saviour who *has come*, and has done all that was predicted of him, so far as the times have gone on. The Son of Righteousness, whose rising beams Isaiah saw far in the distance, is shining o'er the earth, and the ends of the earth have seen and are singing the salvation of God.

Infant Department.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS.

BY PROF. E. S. BREIDENBAUGH, M. A.

Palm Sunday.

SPRING IN THE GARDEN.

April 6, 1879.

{ Matt. xxi. 1-11.
{ Luke xix. 28-40.

Although much that is very profitable may be learned by us from the Book of Job, I suggest that other lessons be taught the wee folk on the first and second Sabbaths of this month.

For to-day it will be well to describe, first, the incidents which have lead to the calling of this Sabbath "Palm Sunday." Give as graphic, an account as you can, of the scene of glorious honor paid Jesus, the Messiah. Or it may be that your children are sufficiently acquainted with the incident, to give it to *you* in answer to questions. At least try this plan.

(After having the account of the incident, write on the board the four letters P A L M. One under the other as in the acrostic at the close of the

lesson, and fill in each capitalized word as you come to it, if not the whole sentences.)

We cannot do as those of old, wave branches of palm—and cry out in welcome of Jesus, "Hosanna to the Son of David and Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Jesus is not among us as a man. He is in heaven. But we would be like stones if we would not try to praise God and show our love as did the children when he was on earth. (Matt. xxi. 15). Now to-day we will learn a few lessons from the *garden*. We will see how we can do with ourselves such things as we do in the garden in the spring, and thus please God.

After the garden is dug, what is done? Yes, the next thing is sewing the seed—or *planting* the garden. What do you plant? Corn, peas, beans, tomatoes, cabbage, and other vegetables. Yes, and pinks, pansies, phlox, lady slippers, candytuft and many other beautiful flowers. Did you ever hear of any one planting thistles, cockle,

Jamestown weed, wild mustard, briars, and other weeds in the garden? Such persons would not be trusted in our gardens. We wish to have useful and beautiful things, and must have good seeds.

We are often told that our hearts are like gardens—the Bible so speaks of our hearts. Now if we do naughty things, what kind of seeds have been put in our heart gardens? Yes, the bad thoughts of Satan. We should have the good seed of God springing in our lives, in the “little deeds of kindness, the little words of love,” that make others happy, and thus we praise Jesus better than if we could have the palms and cry out praises. Thus our hearts must be PLANTED with good seed.

In planting do we mix up all sorts of things everywhere? No! paths are made; the beds are all nicely ARRANGED and every plant is put in orderly. Such a nicely arranged garden pleases us much better than one all in disorder. Now it is the same with us. We should have a desire to have everything in order, we should wish to have all our thoughts good ones. We should always be ready to say to Satan, No! I will not do wrong. And more, we should be neat and cleanly about all we have to do. Our acts should be well arranged. Such a heart is always ready and anxious for the eye of God to look on it, for God’s seeing us about to do wrong will help us to keep doing the right.

To thus arrange a garden nicely is not easy. Nor is it easy to keep wicked thoughts and unkind words, and bad acts from coming from our hearts. Hard LABOR is necessary in our vegetable and flower garden, and in our heart garden. But in flower gardens, you have your parents, or older brothers or sisters to help you. In the heart garden God helps us all. But we must labor hard ourselves, else Satan will persuade us not to ask God for his help. We must constantly fight against sin. God always helping us, Satan cannot stand this, he will be driven away.

In speaking of arranging a garden we said paths were laid out. In many gardens paths are made, but they need fixing up. So we must MEND our paths.

Yes, that is so, in a well kept garden we must labor on the paths. So also we say of a man, or boy or girl; who is going wrong, he had better mend his way—she had better go right; what do we mean? why, the person is on a bad life road. If the path in the garden has stones and weeds and loose stuff lying around—or is broken and rough, it must be cleaned and weeded. In the lesson which we had some weeks ago (Feb. 16) we learned that if we go with a bad person we are on the wrong way—our path is not right, we will have a hard time, yes a rough time, doing right. So we must watch which kind of a way we have. We must keep our path straight to God—we must mend it—keep it right if we would reach heaven.

Thus we learn several things about ourselves from the garden, and we can give praise to our good God, our precious Jesus.

Spring is the time to begin garden work. While we are young is the time to begin working in our hearts, having Jesus therein.

Here on the board we have—

PLANTING good seed.

ARRANGE our lives.

LABOR against our sins.

MEND our ways.

Easter Thoughts.

April 13.

Math. xxviii.

Why did we call last Sunday Palm Sunday! what was Jesus doing on the first Palm Sunday? what were the people doing and saying? How can we praise Jesus? why should we? what four things do we learn from spring work in the garden? (Point to each initial letter of the several lines.) What should we plant and why? How should we arrange our lines? How can we do this? How shall we labor and against what? who will help us? How about our path—our way of life, our company? why begin new while young?

To-day we will have our Easter lesson. What is Easter? We have this day to celebrate the rising of Jesus from the tomb. Wicked men had crucified Jesus—his body was placed in the rock grave, but early on Sunday morning he rose from that grave.

Now there are six things I wish you to think of to-day all about Jesus rising from the grave. (Write on the board the word EASTER, and fill up during the lesson as shown at the close of the lesson—as directed for the lesson of last Sabbath.)

Before Jesus was crucified he told his disciples what was about to happen. They could not understand, and when he rose from the dead they thought possibly some one had stolen the body away, perhaps their enemies. They soon found that it had happened *exactly as Jesus had said*. He had risen. Whatever Jesus says is true. He says he loves us.—he says he died for us—he says he prays God that our prayers may be heard and answered—he says he will send his spirit to help us labor against Satan; this is all exactly as Jesus tells us—do we believe it? then let us love Jesus.

What was it Jesus said to his disciples would happen after he had been buried? he would rise from the dead—yes he *arose from the dead*—what is this to us? does it make any difference? a great deal—for unless Jesus had risen from the dead, his dying would not save us, his blood could not wash away our sins, his prayers could not be to God for us, his spirit could not come to help us in our labor against sin.

Jesus is risen—the grave could not hold him. He has become our Saviour. “Blessed Jesus, hear us when we pray” and teach us so to pray that God may hear us. Do you think Satan was pleased when Jesus rose from the dead? No indeed. Satan is never pleased when any thing happens that may help us toward God—when Jesus rose *Satan trembled*. He knew that now we sin-loving men and women—and girls and boys—would have the strong love and help of Jesus to keep us in the way of doing right. You remember how Satan tempted Jesus. Jesus was not lead to do wrong. He was too strong for Satan. If we have Jesus on our side we can conquer Satan. We can keep our thoughts right, we can keep our mouths from saying bad words, our hands from doing things.

But we do sometimes do wrong.

Yes that is because we forget Jesus. Last Sabbath we had a lesson on our hearts being kept right. Now we will speak of one of the ways of having this help of God, of Jesus on our side.

We must *think of Jesus*—what shall we think about Jesus? his love, his kindness to children and all persons on earth, his punishment of those who do wrong. We should think that he loved us so greatly as to suffer on the cross and to die for us. He rose from the dead and now in heaven sees—hears us when we pray—helps us. What should we do without Jesus?

What would you think of a boy or girl who never thinks of his parents? I do not believe there is such an one. Whenever we forget Jesus, then we are sure to do wrong. Thinking of Jesus and his love will be a great help to us in trying to do right. When a ship is coming in from the ocean, and the captain wishes to go into a harbor, he is afraid of the rocks and sand near the shore. He does not go headlong, but is very careful; but he has a first-rate guide. He keeps his eye on the light in the lighthouse; he tries never to lose sight of it, and thus arrives safely in the harbor. We must thus ever keep Jesus before us—think of him. We are always in danger, for you all know how very easy it is to do wrong. So we must think of Jesus *every day*. If you love any one very much you often think of them. Unless we love Jesus a great deal we will not think of him as much as we should. Try to remember this. To-day we should think of the *Resurrection*, and not to-day alone, but always; because we must some day be buried, and also we will some day rise from our graves. Those who love Jesus will rise to live with him in heaven. That will be glorious. To live for ever with Jesus.

(There will finally be on the board the following. It may be well to review the several lives to-day to impress them on the memory of the children.)

EXACTLY as Jesus said, he

AROSE from the grave.

SATAN trembled.

THINK of Jesus

EVERY DAY, and of the

RESURRECTION.

As Golden Text repeat Luke xxiv. 34: "*The Lord is risen.*"

Queen Esther, or Helping Others.

April 20.

Review. Why do we celebrate Easter? Why did Jesus rise from the dead? What had Jesus told his disciples before? What does Jesus say of his love to us? Does all Jesus says come true? What did the rising of Jesus do for us? How did the rising of Jesus affect Satan? What should we think concerning Jesus? When should we think of Jesus? Why should we think about the resurrection of Jesus?

The subject for to-day may well be narrowed down to such a portion of the history of Esther as illustrates the best method of helping others who are in trouble.

The chief incidents in the history recorded in the Book of Esther may be recounted.

A king of Persia called Ahasuerus was very powerful; he could command whatever he wished, and if men could do it, it was done. This king seems to have had a wish to do whatever was right, but was easily led by bad men to do wrong. The queen was called Esther, a very beautiful woman, and Ahasuerus loved her very greatly. Among the officers who were much with the king was one called Haman. The king thought a great deal of him, and would do anything Haman wished him to do. This was very unfortunate, because Haman was a very wicked man. A man named Mordecai also had work of some kind about the house of the king. Mordecai and Esther were both Jews, and Mordecai was the uncle of Esther.

Haman was a very proud man, and he was very angry because Mordecai did not bow down his head when Haman passed him. So Haman said, "I would not like to kill Mordecai alone, but I will see if I cannot find a way to have all the Jews killed." Haman hated all of the Jews who were here among the Persians, away from their own home. Haman persuaded the king to say that those who hated the Jews might, on a certain day, kill

all the Jews and take all their property.

When Mordecai heard this he was very sorrowful. Esther heard of this and sent to her uncle, who told her that she must try and help her people, the Jews. Esther one day had the king to dinner, and only invited Haman beside. This made Haman feel so very proud that when he went home he made a gallows seventy-five feet high, on which he said, "I will hang this wretch Mordecai."

That night, when the king could not sleep, he made a servant read to him out of the history, and there was read something the king had forgotten. It was this: One day Mordecai had heard two men make a plan to kill the king. Mordecai had news sent to the king, and this saved his life. The king was sorry he had forgotten this act of Mordecai's. Haman happened to come in just then to ask permission to hang Mordecai on his high gallows, but the king said to Haman, "What shall I do to the man whom I delight to honor?"

The proud Haman thought, here is my chance to have people know how great I am, for he thought the king meant him. So he said, "Put such fine clothing as the king wears on this man, and place him on the king's horse, and have the greatest officer lead the horse through the city, and say, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor.'"

Then the king said to Haman, "Make haste and do you do this for Mordecai the Jew." Haman was very angry at this, but he obeyed, though he felt that all was going wrong with him.

The next day again Haman was at dinner with Esther and the king, when Esther told the King of the plan Haman had laid against her and the other Jews—for Esther was a Jew, and she was included. The king was very angry, and caused Haman to be hung on the gallows he had built for the hanging of Mordecai.

The king then said the Jews should be allowed to defend themselves, and as the people knew the king was not angered against the Jews, they did not fight so much against them. Mordecai became a greater officer than Haman

had been, and was a very good and useful one.

We see that Esther did what she could for those in trouble; she even ventured to do what was usually punished by death, that is, go into the king's room when he had not called her, for such was the custom then.

You can be like Esther or Haman, whichever you may wish. You can harm others, get the innocent into trouble, and have them harmed, or you can help others, keep them from injury, and comfort them in trouble. Which would you rather be like? Why? Because you would be greatly loved by those you help? That is not the proper reason—because God desires it.

You may not be able to do great things like queen Esther, but she only did what she could. So God will be pleased with your small acts of help for others if you do what you can. There are two reasons why we should do this—we have mentioned one—because God wishes it. The other is because we love to do good to others.

If you try to see how you can help others, you will find many ways of doing kind acts. In our last two lessons we spoke of the help Jesus gives us. In this work we always have his help. And if we are in trouble ourselves, God will help us. He never wearies, never is careless—always ready. Esther had this help; it made her bold to speak to the king; God had the King Ahasuerus do what Esther wished. Our Golden Text says this same thing. "*Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass,*" Psm. xxxvii. 5. Haman forgot this. Wicked men forget God will help those who love him and thus these wicked men themselves, suffer what they would have done to others.

The Coming Saviour.

April 27.

Isa. xlii. 1-10.

Review. Who was Ahasuerus? Haman? Mordecai? Esther? Why was Haman angry with Mordecai? What did Haman have the king say should be done? What did Mordecai do? What had he done for the king? What reward was given him? How did Ha-

man feel over this? What did the Queen Esther have the king do; What happened to Haman? To Mordecai? Which would you rather be like, Haman or Esther? Why? How can you be like Esther? Who helps us if in trouble? Repeat the Golden Text. Do wicked men think of this?

In the lesson of the second Sabbath ago we found that whatever Jesus said happened exactly. To-day and for several Sabbaths we will have as lessons what good men had said about the coming of Jesus before he really came.

Now we speak of Jesus as having been on earth. We say Jesus died for me. Before Jesus was born the people of God only knew that there was to be a Saviour. And many believed in him before he had come. When Jesus came, he was just such a person; he did just such things and suffered, and died, and rose from the dead, just as had been said long before he came would be the case.

The persons who wrote about what was to happen are called prophets. The one who wrote our lesson to-day was called Isaiah. Isaiah was a good man, who lived about 700 years before Jesus came. He told the people of their sins and warned them of the punishment that would surely come on every wrong doer.

This lesson tells us what kind of a person Jesus was to be and what he would do. As we know what kind of a person Jesus was and what he did, we can easily tell if Isaiah really knew. If we find he knew, then we know that God told him what to write.

The first verse says God delighted in Jesus, for God's very words are here given as if God himself was speaking. The verse also says that God gave Jesus his spirit, and supported him in the work to which God had elected or chosen him. And this work was to bring us knowledge of the way to be saved. This we know is true about Jesus.

How did Jesus work? Just as Isaiah told those who lived long ago would be the case.

Verse 2. He would not cry loud and speak so that every one in the street

would look at him. No! he spoke kindly, gently, lovingly, Do you remember when Jesus spoke this way, to little children? when he raised Jairus' daughter?

Verse 3. Isaiah said Jesus would be kind and loving, and would give persons a chance to repent of their sins; and so it was, if any one came in sorrow for sin. Jesus did not say "See here, you have been very bad, you ought to be punished. You must let me see what sort of a person you are going to be." No such hard words were spoken, but Jesus said "Thy sins are forgiven."

Repeat verse 4. Jesus was very brave. He bore the terrible suffering of the cross till it was finished. His spirit labors now among men.

Verse 6. Repeat this verse. God did

support Jesus—did help him. Refer to the prayer of Jesus on Gethsemane. God did give Jesus as a pledge for the forgiveness of the sins of all who should believe, even the whole world.

Verse 7. Repeat. Jesus opened our eyes to see the messages of God, and releases us from the prison of Satan.

How came it that Isaiah knew of this years before it happened. God who made all things, and keeps and cares for all, told him.

God should be praised by us for giving us such wonderful news. We will repeat what Isaiah says in v. 10, and what sounded from heaven when Jesus had been baptized.

What is our Golden Text? "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" Matt. iii. 17.

Gleanings from the Great Field.

NEWS AND NOTES.

BY REV. S. B. BARNITZ.

OUR SUNDAY-SCHOOLS IN BALTIMORE.—

Privileged to rest a few weeks in this beautiful city, we have learned the following interesting facts concerning our Sunday-schools:

First English Evangelical Lutheran, Fremont street and Lanvale avenue. Though the Sunday-school of the *First Church*, this is really but little over four years of age. The burning of the old church on Lexington street, and the necessary removal to another part of the city resulted in dismemberment of what was the *old school*. On the 3d of Jan., 1875, the present organization was formed, there still being a healthy nucleus of faithful workers. On that day the officers, teachers, and scholars in all departments aggregated 142. Visiting the school on February 9, 1879, we found a membership of 358. The largest attendance during 1878 was 278, and the average 222. Twenty-two scholars were present every Sunday during 1878, and forty were present fifty Sundays. The library contains 1100 well-selected volumes, and the circulation during the year was 4726. The Sunday school rooms are among the finest and most convenient we have ever visited. Everything that can attract is there. A sweet-toned and yet powerful pipe-organ leads the music of the school. Surely "the lines have fallen" unto members of this school "in pleasant places." Our prayer is that amid their great comfort and beautiful *Sabbath Home*, they may remember the many who are without and

come up to the full measure of privilege and responsibility.

The Sunday-school of the Second Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lombard street, numbers 399 on roll, with 34 teachers, and 7 officers. Of the number on roll, 130 belong to the infant school. The pastor, Rev. George Scholl, and Mr. John W. Rice, are associate superintendents, and under their management the school is flourishing. The other officers are faithful and diligent in the performance of their duties, and the teachers earnest in their labors, and deeply interested in their respective classes.

A large number of the older scholars are members of the church.

The male Bible class, taught by Mr. S. W. Harman, is at present especially interesting, some of its members having recently given themselves to the Lord.

This school, at the opening of its sessions, makes use of a service, in which the teachers and scholars respond to the superintendent, and join audibly in prayer. In consequence there is no listlessness or inattention during the opening exercises, but, as a rule, all appear devout and attentive.

The singing is remarkable for its excellence.

St. Mark's Sunday-school.—On Sunday, January 26, 1878, school numbered 66 officers and teachers, 137 male and 196 female scholars in main school, 130 (male and female) in infant department, making a total of 529.

On that Sunday there were present 61 of the 66 teachers (four detained by sickness), 121 of 137 male and 157 of 196 female scholars in main room; 90 of 130 scholars in infant class, making a total of 429. The day was cloudy

and threatening, but the attendance was large in proportion.

The first twelve to fifteen minutes of the session are spent in learning a new hymn relating to the subject of the lesson for the day, and the Superintendent says it makes the scholars more prompt on time, for they all love to sing. In this way the lesson is brought vividly to mind, before entering upon the teaching of it. The opening service proper and the usual programme of the school then follow. It is made a point to sing at least one congregational hymn and tune during the service.

The pastor of the church habitually visits the school towards the close of the session, and makes the final prayer.

There are 28 female and 21 male classes in the main room. The male department of the infant school is divided into classes, each class under the care of a young lady. The female department of the infant school is taught in one class, being under the care of several ladies. The two departments occupy separate rooms, but by sliding doors the rooms may be made virtually one, for a portion of the session during a general exercise. The whole infant department is under the supervision of a lady superintendent and her assistant. The exercises in this department are entirely separate from the main school. They have their own organ, and their own form of opening and closing service. The partition between the main school and infant school was constructed so that no sound passes from either to the other. Hence the singing in either room occasions no inconvenience or disturbance in the other.

The organization of the school gives the male superintendent in the main room the position of head of the school in all its departments, devolving upon him the superintendence and direction of all its exercises, and the supervision of all its interests.

The teachers meet on the 1st Tuesday night in each month for prayer and consultation upon matters relating to the school. There is also a meeting of teachers at the superintendent's house every Friday at 5 p. m., to go over the lesson for the next Sunday. These meetings are very helpful to the younger teachers.

The AUGSBURG TEACHER is used as the teacher's help, and is valued as among the best publications of the kind. Three hundred and fifty copies of the *Lutheran Sunday-school Herald* are distributed monthly in the main room. Another paper, adapted to the very young, is distributed weekly in the infant school.

St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Sunday-school numbers, on the average, 260 scholars, 21 teachers. We do not follow the National Lessons; tried the experiment, but found that teachers would not study their Lesson Leaves sufficiently. Besides, the crucifixion, etc., at *Christmas* time, grated too harshly on our German feelings. We study the gospel for the day, meeting once during the week for preparation. Besides, children are requested to *memorize* a portion of the *Lutheran Catechism* for every Sabbath. The last Sunday of each month we call *Mission-day*; we do not study any

regular lesson on that day, but sing more than usual, and talk to the children about missions, then take up "collection for missions, class by class, and before closing the amount raised by each class is announced to the whole school. On anniversary of the Reformation we have our annual missionary meeting for the children, when the entire amount raised is announced, and by a vote of the children appropriated, partly to our Missionary Society and partly to our Orphans' Home at Loysville, Pa. My catechumens number about 50, ranging from 13 years to 30. It is customary with us, that the younger members of the catechumens in divine service occupy the very front pews, thus exposed to the eyes of the whole congregation. When the minister enters to open divine service, they arise and remain standing until the minister is seated, thus to show their respect for their teacher. I did not introduce this custom, but I like it; it is necessary especially in this country, that the young should be taught to respect the ministry. H.

St. Paul's Sunday-school, Rev. J. A. Clutz pastor and superintendent, is the youngest of our English Lutheran Sunday-schools in Baltimore. It was organized about seven years ago as a Mission Sunday-school, over a livery stable on Pennsylvania avenue. Its growth was so rapid that it was found necessary to erect a chapel or church to accommodate it. The latter was decided on by the committee appointed for that purpose from our Lutheran churches, and as a consequence we have the large and handsome building which stands at the corner of Druid Hill avenue and McMechen street, and in the admirably arranged lecture room of which the Sunday-school now meets. It has the names of over 300 scholars on its rolls, and an attendance of 250. Like all good Lutheran Sunday-schools it uses the publications of our Board, the scholars being supplied with the Augsburg Lesson Leaves, and most of the teachers being subscribers to the AUGSBURG TEACHER. As it is the aim of the superintendent to have everything in the school done "decently and in order," a regular programme of exercises has been adopted, which allows only so much time to be spent in each exercise. A notable part of this programme is the recitation by the school of the Lesson Topic for the day, the Lesson Taught and the Golden Text, and the singing of the hymn of the Lesson Paper, thus utilizing every part of our excellent Lesson Leaves. Fourteen of the teachers have been promoted from the ranks, having been previously scholars in the school, and in the past five years, since the organization of the congregation, forty-eight of the scholars have become full members of the church by confirmation and baptism.

FREDERICK, MARYLAND.—Sunday, February 16th, was a winter day of rare beauty, and a day of great spiritual enjoyment to us during a visit to our church and Sunday-school at Frederick, Md. The evening service was a missionary service, and Dr. Diehl estimated the audience at from 850 to 1000 persons. It was not only thus large, but was also an interested

and *patient* audience, for they listened to an address of an hour's length—none going away. The singing was earnest and sprightly, well led and the leading well followed. From the report of the secretary of the school—January 1st, 1879—we learn the following:

"Main school, 11 officers, 25 male teachers, 26 female teachers; scholars, 209 boys and 205 girls, total, 414. Infant school, 5 teachers; scholars, 124 boys and 127 girls, total 251. Mission school, 4 officers, 8 teachers; scholars, 50 boys, 30 girls, total 80. Grand total of scholars, 745!"

What a great field for work and reward this "grand total of 745!" What an immense amount of material from which to add unto the church! What a field in which to cultivate the grace of giving, the missionary spirit and the care of our orphans! The Sunday-school at Frederick is surely one of our largest and best equipped. Its privileges and responsibilities are correspondingly great. That many may rise in the last day to call the Sunday-school workers of Frederick "*blessed*," is the prayer of their 16th of February visitor.

SCOTLAND.—The eleventh annual Scottish National Sunday-school Convention was held in Ayr, on Friday and Saturday, October 3 and 4. Ayr, it will be remembered, is the birthplace of Robert Burns. Papers were read on "Bands of Hope," and "How religious instruction in day-schools should be related to Sunday-school work." Mr. Robertson, of Edinburgh, spoke of his recent visits to Sunday-schools in the United States. These are some of the peculiarities he specially noted, as mentioned in *The Sunday-school Chronicle's* report of his speech: "Having recently returned from a visit to America, he gave, in the course of his address, a mass of information about Sunday schools across the Atlantic. He commended the energy displayed by our cousins in such work. He found many among the upper classes unwearied teachers. He met with barristers, wealthy merchants, and cultured ladies, in visiting some of the schools in New York and Philadelphia. He saw one lady with a class of two hundred and fifty little children. Then in regard to accommodation the Americans were ahead of us. He saw school premises so constructed with sliding doors, etc., that the scholars could be confined either in separate class-rooms, or all the classes could be thrown open to view. The blackboard was in common use."—*Sunday-school Times*.

A MEETING was lately held in the parlors of the Y. M. C. A., of Harrisburg, to consider the practicability of organizing a Sunday-school assembly after the manner of the Chautauqua assembly, to be held on the camp ground at Oakville, early the coming summer. The matter of all preliminaries and preparation for this assembly was put in the hands of the following committee, who will, as far as possible, mature their plans at an early day and report progress through the press of the State. Committee: H. R. Mosser, of New Cumberland (chairman), J. H. Redsecker, Rev. J. B. Young, C. B. Neisley, J. R. Eby, Rev. A. H. Rice, J. N.

Scouller, James McCormick, Rev. T. S. Wilcox, W. G. Reed, and Rev. J. C. Clarke, Ed. S. Wagoner (secretary). It is proposed by this assembly to give to the Sunday-school workers of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, District of Columbia, and Delaware, the opportunity of a higher course of Sunday-school instruction, such as is afforded at Chautauqua, making it less expensive by being nearer their homes.

A KENTUCKIAN IN WHEELING.—The same day I crossed over to Wheeling, W. Va., and at 2 o'clock p. m. met with the mission school. Rev. S. B. Barnitz, a Lutheran divine, is Superintendent. His pupils, numbering 600, are gathered from among the families of mechanics and laboring men. He is encouraged by people of all denominations, and it is said to be the best school in Wheeling. The very small children, numbering 200, he calls his jewel department. They are in charge of a noble lady teacher, who is well qualified to inspire them with a love of early piety, and the biblical instruction imparted in this school will make lasting impressions upon society that will live long after they have passed away.—*Paducah, Ky., Daily News*.

SALEM, OHIO.—A GOOD WORK.—*The Mission Sunday-school*.—A great many persons in Salem are not aware that a very successful Mission Sunday-school has been conducted in Friends' Meeting House, Broadway, for nearly two years past. "To present Christ to the heart, is the alone object of this school," we learn from a card lying before us. The school is under the management of Mrs. S. H. Benedict, Superintendent, and Messrs. E. A. Benedict and J. M. Kenreigh, assistants. They have enrolled the names of one hundred and fifty-six children who are regular in attendance.—*Salem Republican*.

"THE BLACKBOARD."—Under this title the Publishing House of the Evangelical Association, at Cleveland, Ohio, is issuing illustrations of the International Lessons, the size of a 46 by 31 blackboard. The specimens we have seen are excellent. Price per year, \$3.00. Per quarter, \$1.00. They can be ordered of H. S. Boner, 42 N. 9th Street, Philadelphia.

A GOOD DEFINITION.—A little girl, of three or four years of age, learned the Bible text, "Love one another." What does "love one another mean?" asked her next older sister, in honest doubt as to the meaning. "Why, I must love you and you must love me; and I am one and you are another," was the answer. Who can improve on that exegesis?—*Exchange*.

A GOOD ANSWER.—A missionary in Jamaica once asked a little negro in a missionary school, "Who are the meek?" The child answered, "Those who give soft answers to rough questions."

A COLD LAND WITH RELIGIOUS WARMTH.—All the inhabitants of Iceland are Lutherans. There is a Bible in every house, which is faithfully read. Iceland has no theatre, prison, sheriff, cannon or militia.—*Lutheran Evangelist*.

ITEMS OF MISSIONS, ETC.

Statistics showing extent of missionary work now in progress in Asia Minor, under direction of the American Board of Foreign Missions: Missionaries have occupied, as centres of labor, 26 points, among which are Constantinople, Smyrna, Cesarea, Erzeroum, Tarsus, Antioch, etc. Connected with these are numerous out-stations in which the gospel is regularly preached by educated natives. Number of missionaries now in this part of the Turkish field is 116, including 28 Christian women, specially devoted to labors in behalf of their sex. Number of Evangelical Churches already organized, nearly 100, having nearly 6,000 communicants. Average attendance at places of worship, about 25,000. Contributions to various objects of Christian benevolence during past year, despite hard times, not far from \$20,000. 3 colleges, 4 theological seminaries, and 12 seminaries and high schools for girls, have an attendance of over 800 students taught in the English, Armenian, Turkish and Arabic languages. Common schools, about 10,000 in attendance. Normal schools established at 3 points. An educational and religious literature, amounting to over 300,000,000 pages, has been developed in different languages. Valuable works on Christian doctrine and evidences of Christianity have been published.

—The Protestant movement in France is gaining ground rapidly. The population of the country is about 36,000,000, of whom 1,000,000 are Protestants, and the remainder set down as Catholics. Within the past year a decided movement toward Protestantism has been reported from many parts of the country. In three towns of the department of Allier, where ten years ago there were about sixty Protestants, there are now nearly 1,000, all of them being proselytes. At Montargis, the birthplace of Admiral Coligny, a year ago there were between forty and fifty, now there are one hundred and fifty. At Chateauroux, a Catholic officer was recently buried with great pomp, and in his will was found a clause leaving money to build a Protestant place of worship. Wherever there are 200 or more Protestants without a church, they now receive aid from the State. At Valenciennes, where twenty years ago there were only forty, there is now a church with a membership of 250. At Lyons, the second city in France, and a stronghold of Catholicism, three mission rooms are nightly crowded, while in Paris are conducted twenty-two mission stations, with an average weekly attendance of 8,000.

—The Philadelphia Bible Society held its fortieth anniversary last Sunday. During the past year it distributed 7,547 Bibles and Testaments in the English, French, German, Spanish, Danish, Swedish and Russian languages. It has reduced the price of Bibles to only 25 cents for neatly-bound copies, and 5 cents for a Testament. Of Bibles and Testaments sold during the year there were 80,000 volumes in fifteen languages.

—Mission work in Egypt is progressing. Miss M. L. Whateley says: "It cost more trouble to secure the first five children than hundreds now." She has been nobly assisted by two Syrian converts, who have by their preaching reached Greeks, Copts, Armenians, and others, but with difficulty the Moslems. Schools now consist of 500 children, besides 96 boys in a branch school. Majority of these are children of Mohammedans.

—Prof. S. Wells Williams, of Yale, who has passed more than 48 years in China and Japan, says that tract distribution is held in high estimation throughout the empire; that it is practiced in the interests of false religion; that for missionaries it is no longer a work of peril; and that the number of Christian publications now in the Chinese language is more than 800.

—Mission schools in India:—

	1851	1861	1871
Pupils in Boys' Schools, - - -	53,458	60,662	95,521
Pupils in Girls' Schools, - - -	11,348	16,008	26,611
Total	64,806	76,670	122,132

Since 1871 there has been considerable advance.

—Rev. Mr. Marshall, of Balasore, India, writes: "The Bible, which in the early history of our Mission was considered so unholy a book as to defile the man who touched it, is to-day sought after as no other book is sought. It has already become *the* book among the Hindoos of our nation."

—In the Episcopal Church in Mexico, the little company of 50 disciples has now become 7,000, with 3,500 communicants. Over 500 children are now under instruction in different parts of Mexico, and there are also 11 theological students.

—The Japanese Government never until now has authorized any portion of Scripture to be published in that country. Recently it gave authority to a Japanese publisher to print an edition of Genesis in the Chinese tongue.

—There is always a crowd of Frenchmen or foreigners about the windows of the Bible Depot, in the Place du Theatre Francais, in the heart of Paris, reading, by daylight or electric light, from the open Bibles there displayed.

—Bible-burning does not succeed even in Syria. Some Jesuits who showed their hatred of God's Word in this way excited such dislike that they were obliged to leave.

—The Bible has already been circulated to some extent in the Afghan tongue, a Christian literature is being formed, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress translated into their language.

—Home Mission work of New York City Mission for January is as follows: 40 missionaries, 5,600 visits, 530 meetings, 154 pledges, 532 families aided, etc.

—No less than 9 Lutheran Churches are planted along the line of the Kansas Pacific R. R. Nearly all have pastors, and most of them are self-sustaining.

—In South India there are now about 60 schools with upwards of 4,300 scholars of both sexes.

2d Quarter.

AUGSBURG LESSON LEAF.

April 6, 1879.

Lesson XIV.

International Bible Lessons.

JOB xxxiii. 14-30.

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION.—(PALM SUNDAY.)

14. For God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

15. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

16. Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction,

17. That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.

18. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

19. He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain:

20. So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.

21. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out.

22. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.

23. If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter,

one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness;

24. Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.

25. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth:

26. He shall pray unto God, and he will be favorable unto him; and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness.

27. He looketh upon men; and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not;

28. He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.

29. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man,

30. To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

EXPLANATORY QUESTIONS.

1. From what book of the Bible is our lesson taken? What can you tell about this book and its contents? Who are the chief characters in it?
2. Who is speaking in our lesson, and to whom? In whose behalf? Verse 6.
3. What wrong had he seen in Job and now reproves? Verses 8-12.
4. In what two ways does Elihu represent God as visiting men? Verses 15 and 19.

WARNING.

5. How is the first mode of God's visiting described? Verse 15.
6. In what period of the world's history did God thus visit man?
7. Does he so visit them now? Why not? Compare Heb. i. 1, and Rev. xxii. 7, 10, 18, 19.
8. In these dreams what did God do? Verse 16. Meaning of "openeth the eyes of men?"
9. For what immediate purpose did he do so? Verse 17. For what final purpose? Verse 18.
10. Meaning of "his soul?" "The pit?" "The sword?"
11. Can you mention any instances of God's thus visiting men? See Gen. xv. 12-18, xx. 3, xxxi. 24; Dan. iv. 5, etc., viii. 18, x. 9. Compare 1 Sam. iii. 3-15.

SICKNESS.

12. What second mode of God's visiting men is described in verses 19-21?
13. What three symptoms are here described? Have you ever seen them? Ever experienced them?
14. What is the prospect for the sick man, according to verse 22?
15. What hope is there for him? Verses 23, 24. Meaning of "a messenger," "an interpreter?" Of "his uprightness?" Who is "gracious unto him?" Why?

RECOVERY.

16. What follows the sick man's willingness to be instructed? Signs of it?
17. God's favor is represented as following upon what? Verse 26.
18. What in verse 27 is represented as part of such prayer?
19. What is said in 1 John i. 9? In Psalm ciii. 8-12?
20. What is declared to be God's purpose in dealing thus with man?
21. What is said in Heb. xii. 6? What good advice in the "Golden Text?"
22. To meet what affliction did the only-begotten Son go to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday?
23. What is this week called? Why? What are the conditions of our being glorified with Christ? Rom. viii. 17.

CENTRAL TEXT.—Verses 27-30. Commit to memory.

LESSON TAUGHT.—How God deals with men, and why.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." Heb. xii. 5.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.

M. Job xxxiii. 1-30.
T. " xvi and xvii.
W. Psalm lxxxvi.
TH. " cxix. 65-80.
F. " cxviii.
SAT. Heb. xii. 1-13.
S. Matt. xx. 17-19; xxi. 1-11.

BRIEF NOTES.—E-li-hu is here speaking to Job, and vindicating God's providence. "God speaketh" by occurrences over which he rules, and which we call providences. "Once, yea twice." By dreams and by sickness. "Perceiveth it not"—man is out of harmony with God, and slow to perceive his hand and learn of him. "In a dream"—one of the divers manners (Heb. i. 1) of God's

communications with men in former times, before revelation was complete. He can and may make things known thus now, but as a rule we are not to expect such communications, since the Bible is sufficient to teach us his will and our duty. "Openeth the eyes of men"—causeth them to hear, makes matters known to them. "Sealeth instruction"—makes it solemn and sure. "That he may withdraw man" from wickedness and pride. It is a visitation of gracious warning. "His soul" is his life. "The pit"—the grave, death. "The sword"—violent, untimely death. Verse 20 marks the loss of appetite that belongs to sickness. Verse 21, the loss of flesh and plumpness. "The destroyers"—whatever destroys life. "A messenger"—whether angel or other minister. "An interpreter"—to explain God's ways and lead him to know the purpose of his affliction. "One among a thousand"—a phrase indicating rare occurrence. "His uprightness"—God's uprightness; some think it means the right way for man to take, the way of salvation. "A ransom"—an atonement, a sufficient reason for removing the sickness and delivering from death. The process of recovery is now described. "His face"—God's face, favor. "His righteousness"—man's righteousness. God will regard his right character. "It profited me not"—he sees and acknowledges the hurtfulness of a sinful course. Verse 30 indicates that it is love that chastens.

2d Quarter.

AUGSBURG LESSON LEAF.

April 13, 1879.

Lesson XV.

International Bible Lessons.

JOB xlii. 1-10.

PROSPERITY RESTORED.—(EASTER.)

1. Then Job answered the LORD, and said,
2. I know that thou canst do every *thing*, and *that* no thought can be withholden from thee.
3. Who *is* he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.
4. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
5. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.
6. Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.
7. ¶ And it was *so*, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against

thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me *the thing that is right*, as my servant Job *hath*.

8. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept: lest I deal with you *after your folly*, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is right*, like my servant Job.

9. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job.

10. And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

EXPLANATORY QUESTIONS.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

1. Who speaks in this lesson? To whom?
2. What about God does Job acknowledge in verse 2?
3. What had impressed this upon him? See previous chapters.
4. Who had before asked the question in verse 8? xxxviii. 2. Why does Job repeat it here? What does he acknowledge here?
5. What had moved Job to speak rashly? What warning is here for us? What should be our prayer, in view of this? Ps. cxli. 3.
6. What did Job say of the better acquaintance with God that he had now learned?
7. In view of this how did he regard himself? Why? How did Isaiah once similarly express himself? Is. vi. 5.
8. What further did he say he did? Verse 6. What is it to repent? Explain why he adds "in dust and ashes?"

RECONCILIATION.

9. Who now speaks, in verse 7? To whom? Why to him?
10. What did the Lord say of his feelings? Toward whom? On what account?

11. Can you mention any of the wrong views of God that they had advanced?
12. Whose views, apart from his rashness acknowledged above, did God approve?
13. What did God admonish the three friends to do? Who was to be their intercessor?
14. What feelings would the having him as their intercessor produce in them?
15. What, in him? What rule does our Lord give in Mark xi. 25, 26?
16. Did the three men obey? With what result?

VINDICATION.

17. When Job prayed for his friends, what did the Lord do for him? Meaning of "turned the captivity of Job?" What did the Lord give him?
18. Who and what were vindicated by this result? Compare Job i. 8-12; ii. 3-6, 9, 10, and xlii. 7-12.
19. Who, greater than Job, passed through greater afflictions than he? What is said of him in Heb. v. 8?
20. How was he vindicated? Luke xxiv. 6-8. Comp. John xvi. 10; Heb. xii. 2.
21. What is he called in Is. liii. 11? In 1 John ii. 1? Compare Ps. xxiv. 3-7.
22. What advice have we in 1 Pet. iii. 17, 18? Compare Rom. viii. 17, last clause.

CENTRAL TEXT.—Verse 10.
Commit to memory.

LESSON TAUGHT.—If we wait on the Lord he will save us.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Behold, we count them happy which endure." James v. 11.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.

M.	Job i.
T.	" ii.
W.	" xv. and xvi.
TH.	" xix. and xxxii.
F.	" xxxviii.
SAT.	" xli.
S.	" xlii.

BRIEF NOTES.—Job is led by Jehovah's addresses to him, recorded in preceding chapters, to acknowledge God's omnipotence, his infiniteness; and he is so impressed with the contrast between God and himself as to be ashamed of things that he had said in the heat of controversy with his "miserable comforters," and under the infliction of his sore trials. He confesses to having spoken unadvisedly about

things altogether "too wonderful" for his finite powers. He quotes Jehovah's reproofs of him, and acknowledges them to be just. He begs God now to listen to him, accept his confession, and instruct him aright. "Demand"—ask. "Declare"—instruct thou me. Verse 5 figuratively expresses his *more vivid* sense of God's perfections. Seeing is regarded as more satisfactory and convincing than hearing about. Verse 6 expresses his sorrow and repentance. To "repent" is to change one's mind, and this is proved by acts. "In dust and ashes." Sitting in these or putting them on the person indicated externally the inward sorrow, just as wearing black as mourning does among us. Eliphaz seems to have been the chief man of the "three friends." These men resorted to wrong views in attempting to vindicate God and in arguing with Job. They held that there is a strict retribution in this life, suffering being proportioned to sinning; similar notions are reproved by our Lord in Luke xiii. 2-5. They counted Job a wicked man, since God had so afflicted him. Job defended himself and God against such charges, and in general was "right," though at times he spoke improperly. The making of Job an intercessor for those who had spoken so ill to and of him would be humbling to them, and would impose the duty of forgiveness on Job. "Captivity" represented evil condition, and "turning" of it indicated prosperity restored. Delitsch says, "The final teaching of the book is, that sufferings are for the righteous man the way to glory; and that his faith is the way to sight." This can be illustrated from the passion and consequent glory of Christ.

2d Quarter.

AUGSBURG LESSON LEAF.

April 20, 1879.

Lesson XVI.

International Bible Lessons.

ESTHER iv. 10-17.

QUEEN ESTHER.

10. ¶ Again Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai ;

11. All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, *there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live ; but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.*

12. And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

13. Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then shall there enlargement and de-*

liverance arise to the Jews from another place ; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed : and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this ?

15. ¶ Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer :*

16. Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day : I also and my maidens will fast likewise ; and so will I go in unto the king, which *is* not according to the law : and if I perish, I perish.

17. So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

EXPLANATORY QUESTIONS.

1. From what book of the Bible is our lesson taken ? Why so called ?
2. Who was Esther ? How did she come to be queen ?
3. In what country was this ? Who was the king ? In what period of the world ?
4. Who was Mordecai ? What place did he frequent ? Why ? In what city was it ?

THE DANGER.

5. What was the situation as described in this book, previous to our lesson ?
6. Who made it known to Esther ? By whom ? Who was Hatach ?
7. What charge had her foster-father sent to Esther ? Verse 8.
8. What law did she plead, in her reply, as preventing her from doing this ?
9. What does she say in reference to its being a well-known law ?
10. What peculiarity of the laws of that country did we learn of in Daniel ? Dan. vi. 8, 15.
11. What did the queen add as a further discouragement to the proposed attempt ?

THE WARNING.

12. What personal warning did Mordecai send back in reply to Esther ?
13. To what expression of faith did he give utterance ? What reason for such expectation ?
14. What suggestion did he make as to her present position in the realm ?
15. What is the "Lesson Taught ?" How illustrated here ?

THE RESOLVE.

16. In her next message to Mordecai what resolve did Esther communicate to him ?
17. What request did she make of him in view of it ?
18. What preparation would she make ? Who, with her ?
19. Although not expressed here, what is clearly implied in connection with this fasting of Jews ?
20. What did Esther say in view of the possibility of not meeting the king's favor ?
21. Can you tell anything about the character of this king ?
22. How would you characterize Esther's resolve ?
23. How did the matter result ? What is the "Golden Text ?"

CENTRAL TEXT.—Verses 13-16. Commit to memory.

LESSON TAUGHT.—God's providence.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Commit thy way unto the Lord ; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." Ps. xxxvii. 5.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.

M.	Esther i.
T.	" ii.
W.	" iii. and iv.
TH.	" v. and vi.
F.	" vii.
SAT.	" viii.
S.	" ix. and x.

BRIEF NOTES.—The author and date of this book of the Bible cannot, with present information, be certainly determined. It was probably written 400 years before Christ, before the Persian Empire was destroyed, and by somebody in that empire and having acquaintance with its chronicles. The name of God does not once occur in it, though His providence is illustrated throughout it. It is called from

its principal character, "Esther," the Persian name of the Jewish maiden, whose Hebrew name was "Hadassah," an orphan adopted and raised by the Benjamite Jew Mordecai, who was descended from the captives carried off by Nebuchadnezzar. The king "Ahasuerus" is by best authorities supposed to be Xerxes, the Great, the invader of Greece, whose character history presents as that of a passionate, cruel despot. He reigned from 485 to 464 B. C., and the occurrences of our lesson probably date shortly after the time of his return in 480. Verse 11 illustrates the seclusion observed by the Persian kings. "The inner court" was the place of audience, where such as were "called" came before the king. No one dared to intrude there, on pain of instant death. "These thirty days"—a long time for the queen not to be invited thither. Verse 13 is what we call an *argumentum ad hominem*. "Holdest thy peace" from intercession with the king. "Enlargement"—deliverance from the straits that had been imposed, occasion to breathe freely, after fear. Verse 14 gives expression to Mordecai's faith that somehow deliverance would arise for the chosen people, even though they were in exile. See Jer. xxx. 11. "Come to the kingdom for such a time as this"—providentially come to royalty, to save the Jews. "Shushan"—another form for Susa, the capital. "Fast"—this, with Jews, implies prayer, and that to the one true God. "My maidens"—her queenly retinue. "If I perish, I perish"—here is heroism, patriotism, noble devotion. Compare Acts xx. 24 ; xxi. 13. The application of this incident to a sinner's approach to God, as in that hymn, "Perhaps he will admit my plea," etc., is a great perversion of truth.

2d Quarter.

AUGSBURG LESSON LEAF.

April 27, 1879.

Lesson XVII.

International Bible Lessons.

ISAIAH xlii. 1-10.

THE COMING SAVIOUR.

1. Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

2. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

3. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

4. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

5. ¶ Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein:

6. I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

7. To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

8. I am the LORD: that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

9. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

10. ¶ Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

EXPLANATORY QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCED AND DESCRIBED.

1. Who was Isaiah? When did he live? What is he sometimes called, and why?
2. What is the title of this lesson? Under what two designations is he introduced, in verse 1? Who introduces him? To whom?
3. What three things are said (verse 1), respecting his relations to Jehovah?
4. How does this correspond with what occurred at Jesus' baptism and at his transfiguration?
5. What is here said the coming Saviour would do? Meaning of that?
6. How is he described in verse 2? Meaning of that? Show how this was fulfilled in Jesus?
7. Meaning of "A bruised reed shall he not break?" Of "smoking flax shall he not quench?" How fulfilled?
8. What success was he to have? Has this been fulfilled? Illustrate from history?

CALLED AND COMMISSIONED.

9. In what four ways is God spoken of in verse 5? Why so described here?
10. What does he say of the coming Saviour's call? Compare John iii. 16.
11. What does he promise him? Commissions him for what? Meaning of "for a covenant of the people?"

12. In what three ways is the work he should do described?

13. Are these expressions to be taken literally or figuratively, or in both senses?

14. From what blindness, and prison, and darkness chiefly was the coming Saviour to deliver men?

15. What evidence did Jesus send to John that he was "the coming Saviour?" Matt. xi. 5.

JEHOVAH'S PLEDGE AND PRAISE.

16. By what name does God here declare himself? Meaning of it?

17. What does he mean by "my glory?" "My praise?" What does he say of these?

18. How is this set forth in Ex. xxxiv. 14? What right has God to feel thus?

19. What evidence of his being God, and what ground of fear and trust are given in verse 9? What is foretold in this lesson? Has it been fulfilled?

20. What does this fulfillment show?

21. What does the prophet now call on the people to do? Why?

22. On what people does he call?

23. What "new song" is this? Is it like the one spoken of in Rev. v. 9?

24. Can you illustrate from history how the prophet's call has been responded to?

CENTRAL TEXT.—Verses 1-4. Commit to memory.

LESSON TAUGHT.—The greatness and goodness of God's love.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. iii. 17.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.

M. Is. xlii. 1-10.
T. Psalm lxxxix. 1-37.
W. Zech. ix. 9; Matt. xxi. 1-11.
TH. Matt. xlii. 14-23.
F. Micah iv. 1-7.
SAT. Gal. iii. 1-16.
S. Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5.

BRIEF NOTES.—Isaiah is sometimes called "the evangelical prophet," because there is so much of the *evangel* or gospel of Christ in his prophecies. Our lesson is quoted in Matt. xii. 18-21 as referring to Jesus, the Christ. Over against the vanity of idols, God says, "Behold my servant." The Son of God assumed the form of a servant. "Whom I uphold." God stands for him, since he represents

God. Compare Ps. xci. 11-13, and John xvi. 32. "Mine elect"—chosen one. "Have put my spirit upon him"—so spoken of as Mediator. Compare Luke iv. 18, John iii. 34, and the account of Jesus' baptism. "Judgment"—right religion. Verse 3 indicates the quiet, gentle, humble manner, as over against loud pretenders. He will commend himself without trumpeting. "A bruised reed," half broken, "will he not break" entirely, and the "smoking," dimly burning, ready-to-go-out "flax he will not quench." Here is set forth his tenderness toward contrite hearts and patience with weak faith and piety. "Unto truth"—Matthew has it "unto victory." Well, truth will triumph over falsehood, and the religion of Jesus is truth. Verse 4 declares his perseverance and success. Many "isles," far-off nations, have received his law. For example, the British Islands, the Sandwich Islands, Madagascar and the South Sea Islands. Verse 5 declares God to be the personal Creator. "Breath" and "spirit" both mean life. "For a covenant"—the new covenant is in his blood. "Blind eyes" "prison," and "darkness," besides having their literal force here, symbolize sin and its effects. From these the Saviour saves. "The LORD"—wherever this is printed in the Bible in small capitals, the original word is Jehovah, which is from the Hebrew verb corresponding to our *to be*, and asserts his essential being, as where he calls himself "I AM." In view of his self-existence and perfection he has a right to claim all glory and praise, and cannot share these with any; for all are inferior. Verse 9 brings forward the fulfilment of prophecy as an evidence of his foreknowing divinity. From Isaiah's position we, in this country, then not known, are in "the end of the earth." The "new song" of salvation is now sung all around the world.

Publication House Bulletin.

Henry S. Boner, Supt. Lutheran Publication House, No. 42 North 9th St., Philadelphia.

Thanks.

Many of the friends of the Lutheran Publication House who have seen the "Idea" of the *Bulletin* page in the March number of the TEACHER have taken occasion to thank us for it and express the hope that it may be continued. They say it keeps them informed as to what is being done, from month to month, at No. 42 North Ninth street. And we may pertinently ask: Who, in the Lutheran Church, should not be interested in the Publication House?

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